



The
Jungle Folk
of
Africa



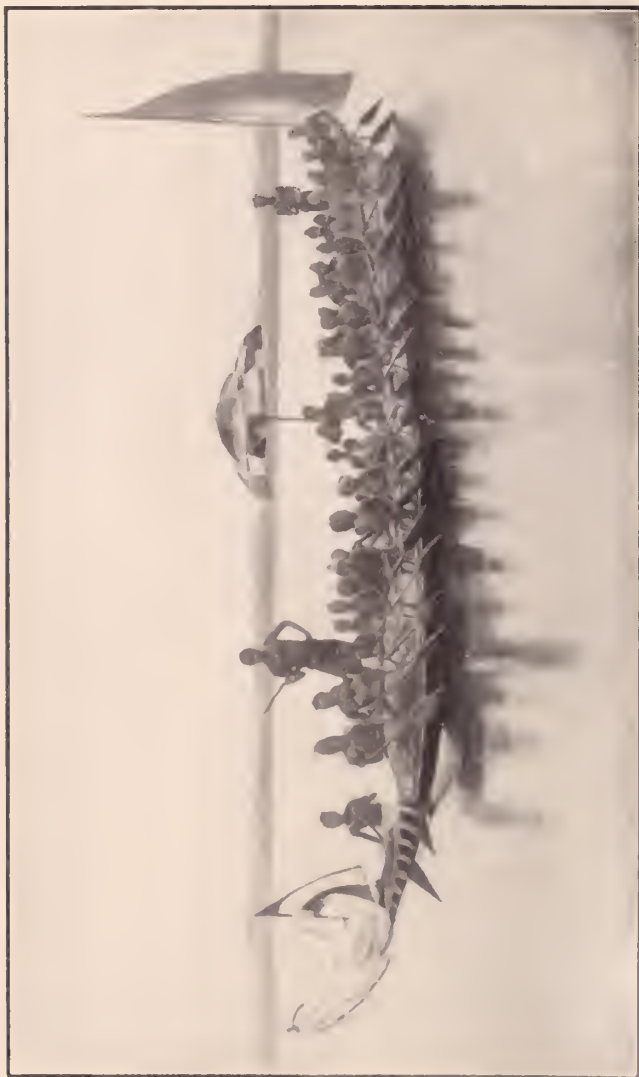
Robert H. Milligan



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The jungle folk of Africa



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CANOE OF A CHIEF ON THE CAMERON RIVER. (See page 354)

The Jungle Folk of Africa

By ✓
ROBERT H. MILLIGAN

ILLUSTRATED



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P R E F A C E

“**I**N the realm of the unknown, Africa is the absolute,” said Victor Hugo. Since the time of Hugo the civilized world has become better acquainted with African geography; but the Africans themselves are still a people unknown.

A certain noted missionary, while on furlough in America, after delivering a masterly and brilliant lecture on Africa to an audience of coloured people, gave an opportunity for persons in the audience to ask him questions pertaining to the subject. He was rather abashed when an elderly negro, who had been deeply interested in the lecture, called out: “Say, Mistah S., is they any colo’ed folks ovah thah?” Most people know that there are a goodly number of “colo’ed folks” in Africa; but the knowledge of the majority extends only to the colour of the skin. And if in this book I endeavour to make the Africans known as they really are, it is because I believe that they are worth knowing.

In the generation that has passed since the books of Du Chaillu were the delight of boys—old boys and young—the African has received but scant sympathy in literature. Du Chaillu had the mind of a scientist and the heart of a poet. He never understated the degradation of the African nor exaggerated his virtues, but he recognized in him the raw material out of which manhood is made. He realized that the African, like ourselves, is not a finality, but a possibility—“the tadpole of an archangel,” as genius has phrased it. But, then, Du Chaillu lived among the Africans long enough to speak their

language, to forget the colour of their skin, and to know them, mind and heart, as no passing traveller or casual observer can possibly know them.

In more recent books the African is usually and uniformly presented as physically ugly, mentally stupid, morally repulsive, and never interesting. This is by no means my opinion of the African. Kipling's characterization, "half child, half devil," is very apt. But what in the world is more interesting than children—except devils?

This book is an attempt to exhibit the human nature of the African, to the end that he may be regarded not merely as a being endowed with an immortal soul and a candidate for salvation, but as a man whose present life is calculated to awaken our interest and sympathy; a man with something like our own capacity for joy and sorrow, and to whom pleasure and pain are very real; who bleeds when he is pricked and who laughs when he is amused; a man essentially like ourselves, but whose beliefs and whose circumstances are so remote from any likeness to our own that as we enter the realm in which he lives and moves and has his being we seem to have been transported upon the magic carpet of the Arabian fable, away from reality into a world of imagination—a wonderland, where things happen without a cause and nature has no stability, where the stone that falls downwards to-day may fall upwards to-morrow, where a person may change himself into a leopard and birds wear foliage for feathers, where rocks and trees speak with articulate voice and animals moralize as men—a world running at random and haphazard, where everything operates except reason and where credulity is only equalled by incredulity. Elsewhere it is the unexpected that happens: in Africa it is the unexpected that we expect.

A knowledge of the jungle folk of Africa will include some acquaintance with their jungle home, their daily

life, their work, their amusements, their social customs, their folk-lore, their religion, and, among the rest, it will include their response to missionary effort. Of these several subjects, those which receive scant treatment in this book will be more fully presented in a second book on Africa, which is now in course of preparation.

I have avoided generalizations and abstractions, in the belief that the concrete and the personal would be not only more interesting but also more informing. This book is, therefore, in the main, a narration of the particular incidents of my own experience and observation during seven years in Africa; incidents, many of which, at their occurrence, moved me either to laughter or to tears, and sometimes both in alternation. For, nowhere else in the world does tragedy so often end in comedy, and comedy in tragedy.

I am indebted to Mr. Harry D. Salveter for his kindness in furnishing me with many photographic illustrations, including the best of my collection.

ROBERT H. MILLIGAN.

New York.

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The Jungle Folk of Africa

I

THE VOYAGE

“O ye ! who have your eyeballs vexed and tired,
Feast them upon the wideness of the sea.”

—Keats.

WHEN I was about to sail for Africa a friend read to me a thrilling incident which was supposed to be prophetic of my own fate. A cannibal maiden proposes marriage to a newly-arrived missionary. The missionary modestly declines her offer ; whereupon, looking down at him with utmost complacency, she tells him that she will have him anyhow—either *married*, or *fried*. I have gone to Africa twice, and have lived there nearly seven years, yet I have escaped both of these dreadful contingencies. There is no longer any glamour of romance about the missionary life. It is not a life of hair-raising adventures and narrow escapes. In those seven years I was never frightened and seldom killed. Dull monotony is the normal experience and loneliness the besetting trial.

Neither are the sacrifices and privations of missionary life so great as many of us have supposed. The sacrifices of the missionary are more tangible, but not therefore greater, than those of the faithful minister at home ; whose sacrifices are often more real because less obvious. A few days before I sailed the second time for Africa,

when I knew from former experience that the missionary life was no martyrdom, I was one day seated at a dinner-table where Africa and my going was the subject of conversation. The company had the most exaggerated ideas of the privations incident to missionary life. There was no use in a denial on my part ; and to have disclaimed any of the fictitious virtues with which they loaded me would only have caused them to add the virtue of modesty to the rest.

A maiden lady across the table, who for some time had sat with abstracted countenance, at last, with upturned eyes and clasped hands, remarked : " Well, I think it is an *appalling* sacrifice."

To have lived up to my part, my face at that moment should have worn a saintly expression of all the virtues rolled into one ; but it happened that my mouth was quite full of pork and cabbage, with which my carnal mind was occupied, and I am sure I looked more like an epicure than an ascetic. Nothing but the pork and cabbage kept me from laughing outright.

Really, life in Africa is much the same as life anywhere else ; and the " privations " only teach us how many things we can do without which we once thought were indispensable. This lesson is impressed the more deeply in such a land as Africa, where a human being may live for threescore years—comfortable, apparently happy, and at least healthy—with little else than a pot, a pipe and a tom-tom ; the first ministers to his necessity, the second to comfort and the third to pleasure. If we will persist in regarding the missionary as a martyr, let us consider that the martyr does not differ essentially from other Christians. Martyrdom is potentially contained in the initial decision of each Christian. The consecration of a life to Christ implies the willingness to lay it down for Him. In an uncivilized land there is a likeli-

hood of unwonted hardships, and among savages some possibility of a violent death ; but the latter is vastly improbable.

One can procure an outfit more conveniently and at less cost in Liverpool than in New York. A week at Liverpool is sufficient for this purpose. The outfit will depend somewhat upon whether one expects to live on the coast or in the bush where he will be cut off from the facilities of transportation by water. All transportation to the interior is by native porters, who carry sixty or seventy pounds on their backs, in loads as compact as possible. This excludes most furniture ; and such furniture as can be transported is usually "knocked down." An ordinary outfit will include several helmets of cork or pith, several white umbrellas lined with green, a dozen white drill suits, denim trousers, canvas shoes, leather shoes, rubber boots, cheese-cloth for mosquito-bars, rubber blankets, pneumatic pillows, hot-water bags, a supply of medicines (unless these are already on the field) especially quinine and castor-oil, a six-months' supply of food—canned meats, vegetables and fruits—besides bedding and kitchenware, tableware, napery, etc., according to need, and guns and ammunition.

There is a romantic interest about this last week spent in the purchase of strange articles for an untried life, and in taking leave of civilization,—of such things as cities, society, music, fresh beef and fine clothes. The last evening in Liverpool I went to hear *Tannhauser*. Music had always been my pastime, and it was not an easy sacrifice to make. I therefore looked forward to that evening with peculiar interest, knowing that not again until my return, however long I might remain in Africa, would I hear any music worthy of the name. But *Tannhauser* proved to be not a sweet parting from civilization but an awful experience, by reason of some one in my neighbour-

hood beating the time with his foot, as they so often do in England. I had one of the best seats in the house, but I exchanged it for another, only to find myself in a worse neighbourhood ; for, in addition to a man on each side of me beating the time, a woman immediately behind "hummed the tune." At the close of the performance I was in a condition of "mortal mind" that would have scandalized those who are disposed to canonize missionaries. But the sorrow of parting was thus mitigated as I reflected that civilization has its pains and savagery some compensations.

I went home and wrote the following to a friend: "Some one alluding to Macaulay's knowledge of history and his unerring accuracy once said that infinite damnation to Macaulay would consist in being surrounded by fiends engaged in misquoting history while he was rendered speechless and unable to correct them ; and I am thinking that my *inferno* would consist in being compelled to listen to some such exquisite melody as *O Thou Sublime Sweet Evening Star*, surrounded the while by fiends keeping time with their feet, and Beelzebub humming the tune."

On my first voyage to Africa (having been appointed to the West Africa Mission, by the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church) I was four weeks on the way, from Liverpool, and landed at Batanga, in Cameroon, two hundred miles north of the equator. On the second voyage I was five weeks on the way, and landed at Libreville (better known as *Gaboon*) in the Congo Français, almost exactly at the equator. Libreville was the capital of the French Congo. *Gaboon* is properly the name of the bay or great estuary upon which Libreville is situated, and is one of the very few good harbours on the west coast. But long before the existence of Libreville, captains and traders had used the name *Gaboon* to designate the adjacent

settlement of native villages and trading-houses, and it is still the name in general use.

We made many calls along the way. Some of the places are very beautiful, such as the Canary Islands, Sierra Leone, Cape Coast Castle, Victoria, Fernando Po and Gaboon ; and some are quite otherwise, for Africa is a land of extremes. Bonny is repulsive, and the Rio del Rey is a nightmare. Meanwhile, we are getting further and further away from all that is known and natural to our eyes, and nearer to a land of strange birds and beasts and trees, inhabited by tribes that to the white man are only a name, or have no name, and to whom he is perhaps an imaginary being, or the ghost of their dead ancestors.

At the Canary Islands, a week after leaving Liverpool, one may spend a day of interest and pleasure. On my first voyage we called at Las Palmas, in Grand Canary Island. On the second voyage we called at Santa Cruz on Teneriffe Island. The object of chief interest is the great Mount Teneriffe, seen sometimes a hundred miles at sea ; probably the Mount Atlas of ancient fable, which was supposed to support the firmament. There are of course many mountain peaks in the world which rise to a greater height above the sea-level ; but they are usually in ranges or on high table-lands far from the sea, and while the altitude is great, the individual peak may not be great. Teneriffe rises directly out of the sea, slowly at first but with increasing inclination, until at last it sweeps upward to the clouds and far above them, to a height of 12,500 feet. The sandy slopes upon the higher altitudes reflect the light with unequalled splendour. From the harbour of Las Palmas we saw the sun rising on Teneriffe. We stood on the deck before the dawn, and while darkness was all around us, saw the heights already struggling with the darkness, and the summit bathed in the light of the unrisen day. A heavy mist rolled down and spread

over the valleys, like a sea resplendent with every interchange of deepening and dissolving colour ; while from below arose the increasing noise and tumult of a half-civilized city awaking from slumber. In a little while the clouds begin to assemble, and the peak is hidden throughout the day : so it is always. But in the evening, the clouds again are parted, like opening curtains, and the whole mountain is disclosed, majestic and beautiful in the light of the setting sun.

On the homeward voyage the steamers often take on an enormous deck-cargo of bananas. They are put in crates the size of barrels and are packed in straw. In the event of a severe storm before reaching Liverpool they are more than likely to be washed overboard. It is a pleasure to watch this loading from the upper deck. The Spanish workmen are neat and clean ; they are skillful and work rapidly, as indeed they must in order to load the entire cargo in one day, which is usually the limit of time. All day long Spanish boys without clothes are crowded around the steamer in small boats, begging the passengers to throw pennies into the water and see them dive and get them. Many pennies and small silver coins are thrown over in the course of the day ; and the boys seldom miss one.

A number of the passengers debark at the Canary Islands, and the rest have more room and more comfort. Immediately upon leaving the Islands double awnings are stretched over the decks ; and the passengers and ship's officers the next day don their tropical clothing. The sea is exceedingly calm as compared with the North Atlantic and the air soft and balmy. It recalled those lines of Keats —

“Often it is in such gentle temper found,
That scarcely will the very smallest shell,
Be moved for days from where it sometime fell,
When last the winds of heaven were unbound.”

The change to tropical life takes place in one day and it is like being suddenly transported into another world. The men nearly all are dressed in white drill suits, and most of them wear white caps and white canvas shoes. If they go ashore at various ports along the way they will exchange the cap for a cork helmet and besides will probably carry a white umbrella. The white suits if well made and well laundered look much more comfortable and becoming than any other clothing. They are usually made in military style with stitched collar, so as we go on further south the shirt of civilization may at length be dispensed with and the coat worn directly over an undershirt,—which latter ought to be of wool and medium weight. Except my first year, I wore no shirt at any time through all the years that I lived in Africa, not even at the French Governor's annual reception at Gaboon. The English at Old Calabar on formal occasions make themselves ridiculous in black dress suits with the conventional area of shirt-front and collar. In these they swelter, vastly uncomfortable, while the starch dissolves and courses towards their shoes down back and breast. It is not only, nor chiefly, the high temperature but the extreme humidity that makes the atmosphere so oppressive. It seems to be seventy-five per cent. warm water.

On shipboard it is usually comfortable and pleasant while we are under weigh. The most delightful part of the voyage is the first few days after leaving the Canary Islands, when the course lies in the track of the northeast trade-winds. One thinks very differently, however, of this trade-wind in coursing against it on the homeward voyage after a length of time on the fever-stricken coast. It seems piercing cold, and, as Miss Kingsley says, one wishes that the Powers above would send it to the Powers below to get it warmed. It is in this zone that deaths most frequently occur on board. On the outward voyage

immediately after the most delightful part of the voyage comes the very worst part of it, as we pass beyond the trade-wind and close in to the coast near Cape Verde. For several days one is tempted to wish that he might turn back. There is a dead calm on board, and the heat is enough to curl one's hair. It recalled Sydney Smith's description of some such place, where "one feels like taking off his flesh and sitting in his bones." But it continues only two or three days. During this time the "punka" is installed, a large fan suspended from the ceiling, the entire length of the table, worked by a rope, which a boy pulls with his hand.

A week after leaving the Canary Islands we reached our first African port, Sierra Leone. It has the finest harbour on the entire west coast. From the harbour it is very beautiful, with mountains of intense green standing like sentinels on either side and behind the town. The sound of the wind raging about these peaks, like the roaring of a lion, gives the name, *Sierra Leone*. Despite its attractive appearance, it is called *The Whiteman's Grave*, and its history justifies the name. But as we proceed down the coast we find that every place which has any considerable number of white men is called *The Whiteman's Grave*. The name *Sierra Leone* applies to the entire English colony; that of the town at this place is *Freetown*. It was originally a colony of freed slaves, which the English planted there during the suppression of the slave traffic. The first ship-load of colonists, between four and five hundred, was landed in 1787. Of these, sixty died on the way or within a fortnight after landing. Freetown has now a population of thirty thousand, and is prosperous. Along the wharf are warehouses with roofs of corrugated iron. The roofs of the traders' houses also, both here and all along the coast, are of corrugated iron. Here and there among the col-

ourless huts of the natives there stands out boldly the frame houses of successful native traders, made of imported material and usually painted an impudent blue. Houses with floors are everywhere called *deck-houses* ; for the decks of ships were the first floors ever seen by the natives.

So soon as we had anchored, the natives, in a score of boats, were crowding about the gangway, pushing back each other's boats, fighting, cursing and yelling, in a general strife for the very lucrative privilege of rowing passengers ashore. However otherwise engaged in this scramble they are all yelling ; and the resultant noise is the proper introduction to Africa. For, as noise is the first, so it will be the final and lasting impression. It is the grand unity in which other associations are gradually dislimned. We went ashore in the late afternoon. The people were all in the streets, moving about, but no one moving rapidly ; all active, but no one *very* active. As there are no vehicles, pedestrians occupy the whole street, which is covered with grass. There is a great variety of dress and considerable undress. Many of the women wear a loose calico wrapper—a Mother Hubbard ; and many of the men are dressed in the Mohammedan costume, which is more becoming, and more suitable for the climate, than any possible modification of European dress. It consists of a long white shirt with loose, flowing sleeves, and an outer garment somewhat like a university gown, of black or of blue. The ordinary man wears anything he may happen to have, from an eighth of a yard of calico to a rice-bag in which he cuts holes for his head and arms.

Ever so many were carrying loads on their heads—never any other way—and without touching them with their hands. Indeed, if their hands were engaged I am not sure whether they could talk ; for when they talk

they gesticulate continually. Some were carrying beer bottles erect on their heads, some carried books, some of the women carried folded parasols; others carried fire-wood, or bananas, or large baskets of vegetables. They exchange the neighbourhood gossip as they pass, but without turning their heads; and sometimes they throw down their loads and seat themselves on opposite sides of the street to have "a friendly yell." When we returned to the steamer we found on board, on the lower deck, about twenty native passengers. They have brought all their household goods, including chickens; and several of the women have babies strapped to their backs. They pay only for a passage on deck, taking the risk of the weather, and expect to yell their way to Fernando Po, in about two weeks. The number of deck passengers increases at each of the next several ports, until the deck is crowded; but they are never allowed on the upper deck.

The deck, formerly spacious and shining, is now covered with baggage, the abundance of which is only exceeded by its outlandish variety. The first mate is the ship's general housekeeper. Cleanliness and order are a mental malady with him. If he could have his way the ship would carry no cargo, since the opening of the hatches and the discharging of it deranges the order of the lower deck and litters it with rubbish. Besides he would like to employ the boat-crews in holystoning one deck or another all the time instead of only once each morning. The sight of a dog affects him more seriously than seeing a ghost. Passengers are a great trial to him who carelessly place their deck chairs for comfort or for conversation with each other instead of leaving them in unneighbourly straight lines as he arranged them. He is rarely on speaking terms with the chief engineer, because the latter must frequently have coal carried from

the forehold ; and there is a standing feud between him and the cook, whose grease-tub sits outside the galley door. The mate's sole horror of a storm at sea is that the rolling of the ship spills the grease. Imagine the life this gentleman lives from the time that the native passengers begin to come aboard and fill the deck with their piles of miscellaneous baggage. He ages perceptibly. Disorder is precisely the weak point in the native character ; and much of the mate's time is spent in pitched battles with the native women, over the bestowment of their goods. No sooner has he, with the help of several deck-hands, arranged a lady's goods in a neat square pile ten feet high and seated her children in a straight row than the lady orders all her children to get out of her way and proceeds to tear down the pile in order to get a cosmetic and a mirror that happen to be in two different boxes in the bottom. When the mate is not around the deck passengers seem very happy as they sit at random on their baggage and yell at each other. Here and there men in Mohammedan dress sit on the sunny deck in cross-legged tailor-fashion, reminding one of old Bible pictures. If they quarrel a great deal they also laugh a great deal, and the quarrels are no sooner ended than they are forgotten.

At Lagos several native men came out in a boat to meet a deck passenger and land his baggage. The natives are not allowed to use the gangway, and if the rope ladder is in use they pass up and down a single rope suspended over the ship's side. On this occasion I observed one of the men from the boat alongside sliding down a rope and carrying a heavy box, by no means an easy thing to do. He expected that the others of his party would be waiting to receive him in the boat below. But they had drifted several yards away and were engaged in eating some potato peelings which a steward had thrown to them. He

called to them but they paid no attention :—they were eating. He yelled at them and cursed them, at the same time making with his legs impressive gestures of appeal and threat. But they sat indifferent until they had finished, while he with his load remained suspended in the air. Moreover, the sea at Lagos abounds with sharks. At last, having finished their repast, they came to his rescue. I was watching eagerly to see how many would be killed in the ensuing fight. But not a blow was struck, and the palaver did not last a minute. So forgetful are they of injuries. And though they are capable of great cruelty towards their enemies, their cruelty is callous rather than vindictive ; not the cruelty that delights in another's pain, but rather that of a dull imagination which does not realize it.

A few days after leaving Sierra Leone we anchored off Monrovia, the capital of Liberia, where we shipped eighty native men, *Krumen*, who were engaged by the ship as workmen for the discharging and loading of cargo. They are engaged for the round trip down the coast, three or four months, and are unshipped again on the homeward voyage. Of these *Krumen* I shall speak at some length in another chapter. They are the original native tribe of this part of the coast and are not to be confounded with the proper Liberians whose ancestors emigrated from America.

Liberia represents the philanthropic effort of America to restore to their native land the Africans carried to America by the slave-trade. A large area of country was purchased from the native chiefs, and in 1820 the first settlement of colonists was established. Liberia is a country of possibilities. There is no richer soil on the entire west coast. It is especially suitable for coffee and cocoa ; but it has remained undeveloped. The poor and ignorant colonists were not fit for self-government. America

should have done more or else less. The Liberians might far better have remained in America. During the several generations of their absence from Africa they seemed to have lost the power of resisting the malaria. The mortality among them was very great and they were pitifully helpless. The government of Liberia some one has said is a fit subject for comic opera. At one time becoming possessed of a little cash, by some wonderful accident, they provided themselves with a small gunboat by which they hoped to convince calling ships that theirs is a real government competent to collect dues, impose fines, and enforce the rules of quarantine and release that obtain at other ports, for which purpose it has proved as ineffective as a pop-gun. But they have used it successfully against the canoes of the Krumen in levying a heavy and unjustifiable duty upon these men when they return from the south voyage with their pay.

After two weeks on shipboard the immobility of life becomes agreeable and we are all content to be lazy. And in the evening when the social instinct is lively and men sit together at leisure in the balmy breeze, under the canvas roof, on a well-lighted deck, the sea so calm as to allay all apprehension, a wall of darkness around us, and the immensity of the sea beyond, as separate from the rest of the world as would be some tiny planet that has separated from the solid earth and rotates upon its own axis, then the charm of travel on the tropical sea is all that the imagination had preconceived,—a lazy, luxurious dream. When Boswell remarked to Johnson, "We grow weary when idle," Johnson replied: "That is, sir, because others being busy, we want company; but if all were idle there would be no growing weary; we should entertain one another." We were all equally idle and lazy, and wished we could be lazier. There were whole days when the conversation—until evening—contained

nothing more epigrammatic than "Please pass the butter," or "Have a pickle?"

The company consists of traders, government officials and missionaries ; and the captain is usually present. As our number diminishes at each successive port, we become better acquainted and more friendly. Men of antipodal differences are thus frequently brought into friendly and sympathetic relations, men who in ordinary life would seldom have been brought into contact with each other, and who never would have known that they had anything in common ; and the experience is wholesome. I have learned to think more kindly of the African trader and to refrain from criticism because of some whom I have known intimately on these long voyages.

As we sit on deck in the evening the captain tells us that at Lagos, where we are due in a few days, he has seen the natives fight the sharks in the sea and kill them. The shark is the monster of the tropical seas, the incarnation of ferocity and hunger. The native takes a stout stick, six inches long and sharpened at both ends. With his hand closed tight around this he dives into the sea, and as the shark comes at him with its terrible mouth open, he thrusts the stick upright into its mouth as far as he can. There it remains planted in the upper and lower jaws of the shark, which, not being able to close its mouth, soon drowns and comes to the surface. It is a good story, and not incredible as a fact ; for the native is brave enough and fool enough to do this very thing. But this is the same captain who tells of fearful storms which he has successfully encountered, when the ship rolled until she took in water through the funnels. He remarked to me one day, speaking of one of his officers who was not the brightest : "I always have to verify his reckoning ; for he always mistakes east for west and invariably puts latitude where longitude ought to be." He also tells of an invi-

tation he once received from a caunibal chief near Old Calabar, to come ashore and help him pick a missionary. He has seen the sea-serpent many a time and knows all about it. It is not dark green with brown stripes, as is geuerally supposed, but is bright yellow with blue spots, and is quite three hundred feet long. On one occasion it followed the captain's ship for several days, at times raising one hundred and fifty feet of its length out of the water, and being prevented from helping itself to a sailor now and then only by great quantities of food which they threw over to it. This caused a famine on board, and they reached the nearest port in a half-starved condition. An affidavit goes with each of the captain's stories. Most captains indulge in this entertaining hyperbole. Some are decidedly gifted with what has been called a "creative memory." I have never yet known a captain who could not turn out as handsome a yarn as Gulliver.

As the company become better acquainted conversation is more intimate and varied. Now we are discussing some subject of continental maguitude, and again, with equal interest, some infinitesimal triviality. Detached from the rest of the world, and with no daily budget of news, our interest becomes torpid, and things great and small appear without perspective on a flat surface of equality. We avowed our disbelief in the infallibility of the pope, and pronounced against his claim to temporal authority. We anticipated all the conclusions of the Hague Conference, and discussed the imminence of the "yellow peril." We resolved that the Crown Colony system was a failure and had never been a success, and we devised an elaborate substitute but could not agree upon the details. We agreed that the English aristocracy had long been effete, and that the Duke of X, related to the queen, was a "hog." We reached the amicable con-

elusion that the thirteen colonics should never have rebelled, and that the blame was all on the side of England. We left posterity nothing to say on the relative merits of the republican and the monarchic forms of government, and decided that the enfranchisement of the negro was a mistake.

In juxtaposition to these discussions, one man occupied the company a part of an evening recounting the entire history of his corns; but I regret that I have forgotten their number and disposition. Another disclosed the fact that he always wore safety-pins instead of garters, and descanted upon his preference with such enthusiasm that he made at least one convert that I know of. I was carefully told how to mix a gin cocktail (though I may never have any practical use for this valuable knowledge) and how to toss a champagne cocktail from one glass to another in a beautiful parabolic curve; also how many cocktails a man might drink in a day without being chargeable with intemperance: in short, if there is anything about "booze" that I do not know it must be because I have forgotten.

One night (but this was another voyage and a different kind of captain) we put in practice the principle of arbitration of which we were all adherents; and the result was my discomfiture. An argument had arisen among us as to which was the more simple of the two currency systems, *dollars and cents*, and *pounds, shillings and pence*—as if there were logical room for difference of opinion! At last, the captain arriving, we decided to refer the matter to him and to surrender our judgment to his arbitrament. The captain (an Englishman of the very stolid sort), after a period of reflection replied very slowly, and with all the gravity of a judge: "Pounds, shillings and pence is the simpler system; for, don't you know, that when you are told the price of a thing in dollars and cents

you always, in your mind, convert it into pounds, shillings and pence."

"Of course, Captain," said I; "I had not thought of that until you mentioned it; neither had I recalled the well-known fact that a Frenchman, while speaking French in the streets of Paris, is really thinking in English. Your decision is as shrewd as it is impartial."

II

THE COAST

BUT the pleasure of the voyage depends largely upon the season. The wet and the dry seasons are distinctly divided. There is a long wet season of four months and a short wet season of two months each year, and corresponding long and short dry seasons. The rains generally follow the course of the sun as it moves between the northern and southern solstice. The regularity of the seasons is modified by local influences such as the proximity of mountains. The seasons at Batanga, for instance, are not so distinctly divided as at Gaboon. I am most familiar with the climate of Gaboon, which is practically at the equator. The long wet season begins in September, when the sun is coursing from the equator towards the southern solstice, and continues nearly four months. The long dry season begins in May and continues for four months. Those are the delightful months of the year. We are accustomed to associate a dry spell with heat and glaring sunshine. But there the brightest sunshine is in the wet season between the showers. The dry season is both cool and shady ; so cool that the natives find it uncomfortable, while the sun is sometimes not seen for a week. It always seems to be just about to rain. A stranger to the climate would not risk going half a mile without taking an umbrella. But he is perfectly safe. There is not the least danger of rain between May and September. Often in the dry season I have travelled through the midday hours in a canoe, lying full length on a travelling-rug with my face towards the sky ; for there

is no glare : the mellow light has the quality of moonlight.

But a strong wind prevails during the dry months, and it is the season when the surf rages wildly on the open coast ; when surf boats with cargo are often broken on the beach and the native crews lose their limbs and sometimes their lives. The ground though very dry does not become parched. The rustling of the palms or of the thatch roof at the close of the season is like the heavy pattering of rain, so much so that sometimes one is deceived in spite of himself. The dry season is healthiest for white men, but not for the native. They are not sufficiently protected against the wind, and pneumonia is common. However much we prefer the dry season, yet we weary of it towards the close, and like the natives we fairly shout for joy at the first shower.

The wet season is very disagreeable. The rain falls in streams, and, as Miss Kingsley says, "does not go into details with drops." There are several torrential down-pours each day and night. In the intervals during the day the sky is swept clear of clouds and the sun shines the strongest. The atmosphere is extremely humid and sultry. With the least exertion, or with no exertion, one perspires profusely, and there is no evaporation. One ought to change his clothing several times a day ; but most of us cannot afford to devote so much time to comfort. Frequent tornadoes often cool the air in the evening.

The most uncomfortable of all places during the rain is on shipboard. The rain will at length find its way through any thickness of awning, and the delightful deck must be deserted for the stifling saloon. Our paradise is transformed to a purgatory. The rain is accompanied by a heavy mist and as it dashes upon the surface of the sea it lifts a cloud of spray that hides the water beneath and

we seem to be drifting courseless through cloudland, with our horizon immediately around us. As it continues day after day everybody becomes depressed ; and as for the captain, it is scarcely safe to speak to him. One day when I was travelling in the wet season, the captain lost a whole day prowling up and down the coast looking for a place which was completely hidden in the rain and mist. He was angry ; and an angry captain is a fearsome object. He is accustomed to being obeyed, and is master of everything else but the fourth element, which occasionally thwarts his plans and derides his authority. At a moment when the rain slackened from a torrent to a heavy shower, a passenger put his head out on deck and remarked : " It's not raining, Captain."

" Well, if that is not rain," thundered the disgusted captain, " it is the best imitation of rain that I have ever seen."

The subject upon which conversation dwells longest and to which it ever returns with gruesome interest is the African fever. The news that is brought on board at each port is like a death bulletin. To the new comer it is all very trying and very tragical. But he cannot escape from it ; for the Old Coaster (and a man who has been out once before is an Old Coaster) assumes the grave responsibility of impressing deeply upon the mind of the tenderfoot the serious conditions which he is about to confront. It is impressed upon him that the fever is inevitable, and that the young and healthy die first ; that temperate habits instead of being a defense are a snare, and that not to drink is simply suicide. Missionaries die like flies. But then of course it comes to the same thing in the end ; there is no escape ; and to worry about it, or to expect it, will bring on a fever in two days. Exposure to the sun is sure to induce fever ; and yet none die so quickly as those who carry umbrellas. Quinine is use-

less except to brace the mind of those who believe in it ; but it isn't any good. And when you get fever, you can't escape, by leaving the coast in a hurry, even if there should be a steamer in port, which is very unlikely ; for a man going aboard with fever is sure to die. Perhaps it is the horror of being buried at sea that kills him.

"How is that new clerk whom I brought out for you last voyage?" asks the captain, of a trader who has come aboard for breakfast.

"Poor chap!" says the trader, "he didn't live two weeks. Another came on the next steamer, and he pegged out in three weeks. They ought to be sent out two at a time."

"You remember so-and-so," says another ; "well, poor chap ! (and as soon as he says "poor chap" we know the rest) he was found dead in bed one morning since you were here. They had used up all the lumber that they had laid away for coffins, so they took half the partition out of his house, to make a coffin ; and then they didn't get it long enough. The next fellow is now living alone in that same house with half the partition gone, and of course he can't help reflecting that there is just enough left to make another coffin ; and, indeed, to judge by the way he was looking when I saw him last they may have used it by this time."

"Have you heard about the poor chap that so-and-so sent up country? Well, he died a few weeks ago. He was all alone except for the native workmen, and as soon as he died they ran away in fear. The agent got word of it and started up country immediately ; but the rats had found him first."

It is only when one reflects that all these "poor chaps" were somebody's sons, and somebody's brothers, that one realizes the tragedy of the coast. These little conversa-

tions on board seem like the final obsequies performed for those who are dead.

"Do men ever die of anything except fever?" asks a new comer.

"O yes," says the Old Coaster. "Let me see: there's dysentery,—poor C died of that last week; and there's enlarged spleen, abscesses, pneumonia, consumption (one falls into consumption here very quickly, and often when he least expects it), kraw-kraw and smallpox (smallpox has just broken out at Fernando Po: that's our next port), not to speak of seven or eight varieties of itch, which some men have all the time; but iteh doesn't kill. By the way, I suppose you know that in this climate it is necessary that bodies be buried a few hours after death."

In the speech of the coast there is no such thing as reticence, and soon enough we all learn to speak with brutal bluntness. The only comfort held out to the new comer is the hope that he will receive, as a sort of obituary, the kindly designation, "Poor Chap."

I have never argued for the salubrity of the African climate; nor am I disposed to protest the general opinion that it is "the worst climate in the world." The white man never becomes acclimatized, and never will until he develops another kind of blood. One lives face to face with the constant and proximate possibility of death as long as he is on the coast. It is an unnatural consciousness, which, when prolonged through years, tends to become fixed and permanent even when one has removed from the circumstances that were its occasion. And yet, the conversation of the Old Coaster is liable to make an exaggerated impression. In the first place, the impression is natural that the climate being so unhealthful must also be uncomfortable. But, in reality, while several months of the year are extremely uncomfortable, the

greater part of the year is tolerably comfortable and there are several months of exceedingly pleasant weather. Neither is the heat so great as is generally supposed. With the greatest effort on my part, I never succeeded in disabusing my friends of the notion that I was slowly roasting to death in Africa. With every hot spell in America, when the thermometer was standing at 100°, their thoughts turned towards me in profound sympathy. While I have at times suffered with the heat and there have been times on the river, between high banks, cut off from the breeze, when I nearly fainted, and one occasion upon which I was quite overcome, yet as a rule I lived comfortably by day; and the nights are always cool. The maximum temperature on the coast is from 86° to 88°, Fahrenheit, and even such a temperature is rare. One ought to add, however, that owing to the extreme humidity this temperature in Africa is incomparably hotter than the same temperature in America. It is the sultriness of the hottest weather that makes it insufferable. West Africa is heated by steam and without the medium of radiators. The uniformity of the climate is pleasurable, and is very strange to us of northern latitudes. One may reckon upon the weather to a certainty. Within the limits of a given season there is scarcely any variation from day to day.

The insalubrity is due to the deadly malaria of the reeking, mosquito-infested swamps. Mr. Henry Savage Landor, after a journey across Africa, announces to the world that he is a strong disbeliever in the mosquito theory of malaria. But, that the mosquito is the agent of the malaria bacillus, medical science no longer regards as theory, but as fact, a fact established by the most elaborate and painstaking series of experiments ever conducted in the interest of medical science. Mr. Landor also tells us that he and his men were frequently attacked

by malarial fever, becoming so weak that they could not raise their hands; but in every case a dose of castor-oil effected a cure in a few hours. He is therefore a strong advocate of castor-oil, but disbelieves in quinine. The use of castor-oil is no new discovery. Every man who has had any experience in West Africa takes it at the approach of a fever. But there is no substitute for quinine. And the medical men of the coast will agree in saying that life depends always upon the judicious use of it.

In recent years there has been such progress in the knowledge of malaria, and how to meet malarial conditions, that the record of West Africa is continually improving. Then again, missionary societies, following the example of the various European governments, have ceased to make war upon the inevitable and have greatly reduced the term of service. In American missions the term is generally three years; in English missions it is a year and a half or two years; and in the government service the term is usually much shorter than in the missions. My first experience in Africa was not a fair test of the climate. We were engaged in opening a new mission station in the bush, and the conditions were the most unhealthful. Our food was the coarsest,—it was several months before we tasted bread; our accommodations were the poorest,—part of the time we lived in a tent that did not protect us against the heavy rains; and besides there were forced journeys to the coast in the wet season with incidental hardships. After a succession of fevers and sensational recoveries I fled from the coast with broken health at the end of a year and a half.

But the second time, when I lived at Gaboon, I stayed five and a half years,—far too long. During the first three years at Gaboon I had fever once every two or three months. I became very familiar with its preceding

symptoms—physical exhaustion for several days, such that the least effort induced painful weariness and a frequent heavy sigh; aching of head and limbs; chills alternating rapidly with feverish heat, and a terrible temper. At the end of the third year I had a very severe fever which, instead of yielding to quinine the third day, became much worse, and the natives carried me in a hammock to the French hospital. There I remained for five weeks. But after that I had no more fever, not even once, though I remained in Africa more than two years longer, which would have been absolutely impossible if the fevers had continued. The difference was in my use of quinine. At first I took quinine only with the attacks of fever, and then I took an enormous quantity. But in the later period I kept myself immune by taking it daily whether I was ill or not. I took five grains every night for those several years. People are usually greatly surprised at this and ask if such an amount of quinine was not a terrible strain upon the constitution. It was, without doubt; but not so great a strain as malarious blood, and frequent fevers, and the shock of very large doses of quinine at such times. If I had not been in greatly reduced health before I began to take it regularly it is not likely that I should have required nearly so much. But this is anticipating; for we are still on the outward voyage.

In general the coast of West Africa is not beautiful; although it has a weird fascination for those who have once lived on it. It is low-lying, straight and monotonous: a gleaming line of white surf, a golden strip of sandy beach, a dark green line of forest—and that is all, for days and days and days, and for some two thousand miles, only broken at long intervals by the great estuary that is a peculiar characteristic of African rivers, and by low hills far away on the horizon. Many of the traders are living, not in the white settlements, but in single trading-

houses and far apart along this lonely shore. They like it or they hate it. To some it is an idle dream-life that they enjoy, and to others it is a nightmare that they abhor. Some of those who came aboard looked like haunted men. Each day is exactly like all the others, and the natural surroundings never vary however far they may wander along the beach—three endless lines of colour stretching away to eternity, the dull green forest front, the yellow strip of sand, the white surge of the foaming surf, and beyond it the boundless sea. Even in the darkest night the forest still shows as a blacker rim against the darkness, and the surf-line is white with a whiteness that no night can obscure. The unceasing sound of it is like low thunder, and unless one loves it he must often think what a relief it would be if it would stop but for one brief moment, and how the silence would “sink like music on his heart.”

In such places, and in the bush, the traders sometimes wear only pajamas, by day as well as night. There are natives enough around, and there is always noise enough; but it is the noise that only emphasizes solitude. And one were better to live entirely alone than to be subjected to the influence of African degradation without the moral restraints of home and the society of equals, unless his religious belief be something more than a mere acceptance of tradition, and his principles something more than conventional morality. There is a better class of natives whose society might relieve loneliness, but the trader, as a rule, does not gather this class around him.

Some are pleased to say very hard things about the traders. But he who would judge justly must have a mind well attempered to the claims of morality on the one hand, and on the other, to the allowance due to the frailty of human nature when placed in circumstances of unparalleled temptation. No man ever realizes the moral

restraints of good society until they are all withdrawn ; nor how insidious the influence even of the most repulsive vices when they have become so common to our eyes that they cease to shock : the moral safety of most men is in being shocked. Of course there are bad men among the traders, and some *very* bad ; and the rumshop which, wherever the white man has penetrated, rises like a death-spectre in the landscape, is an abomination to which it would be difficult to do injustice. But it is not chiefly the trader who is responsible for the rum traffic. Many of them would be thankful if the various governments would entirely prohibit its importation. Moreover, they sell a thousand things besides rum,—as many useful things, and necessary to civilization, as the native is willing to buy. The traders are all men of courage—we can at least admire them for that—and many are honest and many are kind ; and it were far better to refrain from condemning the dissolute than that in so doing one should soil the reputation of an honest man.

We called at Cape Coast Castle, Accra, Lagos, Monrovia and several other places where there are no harbours, and where the surf is so violent that passengers rarely go ashore unless these places are their destination. The longest stop on the voyage was at Old Calabar, sixty miles up the Calabar River, where we stayed five days. Old Calabar when I was there first was the English capital of the Oil Rivers Protectorate, which afterwards became a part of Nigeria. The heat was insufferable ; for, while it is possible to keep cool on the hills where the white men live, it is not possible in the low channel of the river, and especially in the cabin of a steamer. The name *Old Calabar* has a fine far-away sound, like *Cairo* or *Bagdad*, and suggests a place of romantic and legendary interest. And indeed the tales of the *Arabian Nights* scarcely surpass the real history of the native despots that

have ruled at Old Calabar even down to the death of King Duke in our own times, when, despite the presence of the English, it is said that five hundred natives were stealthily put to death to furnish the king a seemly retinue in the other world.

The run up the Calabar River is a pleasant variety after the long weeks on the sea. Here we first saw the crocodile, which abounds in all the largest rivers of Africa. It is the ugliest beast in the world. Lying on a bank of mud, its head always towards the water, and among old logs and roots, it looks itself like some gnarled and slimy log, and is difficult to discern. But at the sound of a gun or the near approach of the steamer it slides down into the water quick as a flash. Most of the passengers get their guns and take a few shots at them. In every case the passenger declares that he has shot the crocodile without a doubt; and as the creature disappears into the water there is of course no way of disproving the statement. But when we were coming down the river there seemed to be as many as ever.

The Spanish Island of Fernando Po is the most beautiful place in West Africa. Seen from the harbour in the early morning light or in the soft glow of the evening it is a fairy-land of tropical beauty. The bottom of the semicircular harbour is the crater of an extinct volcano and is very deep. The bank is covered down to the water with a lavish growth of ferns, and trailing vines, and flowers of many colours; while above the palm tree is abundant—the most graceful of all trees, and the billowy bamboo tosses in the breeze. In the middle and extending backwards is the white town of Saint Isabel, and behind the town stands a great solitary mountain of green, which rises to a height of ten thousand feet. Like other fairy-lands it requires the illusion of distance. It appears best from the harbour, and that is true of most

tropical beauty. The soil is the most fertile in West Africa. I have seen plantains there full twice as large as any that I have seen elsewhere. For some years it has been producing large quantities of cocoa, most of which is shipped to Spain and thence over the world in the form of chocolate.

Africa is a land of extremes. From Fernando Po crossing again to the mainland we went fifteen miles up the Rio del Rey to the ugliest place in the world. I have also been in the Rio del Rey several times on the homeward voyage, when the steamers usually spend a day there taking on palm-oil and rubber,—a coast steamer would go to Hades for palm-oil and take all the passengers along with it. There is no native village here. The three trading-houses receive the produce which the natives bring down the river. All around is one vast mangrove swamp, an ideal mosquito-incubator. The trading-houses are erected upon a foundation made with the ashes of passing steamers, which were saved and deposited here.

The foliage of the mangrove is thin, and at a distance resembles our poplar. But the greater part of the mangrove is a solid mass of roots, almost wholly above ground and more nearly vertical than horizontal. The trees seem to be standing on stilts, six or eight feet long, as if they were trying to keep out of the water. There are also aerial roots, long, leafless and straight, depending from all the branches, even the highest, which as they reach the water spread into several fingers. At the high tide the roots are submerged and the ugliness of the swamp concealed for a while. But as the tide ebbs the roots appear dripping and slimy until they are completely exposed: and as the water still recedes long stretches of fetid mud-bank appear. The smell has been accumulating for ages. A low-lying mist rises from the oozing

banks, and now and then stretches a stealthy arm out over the river, or creeps from root to root. Some one standing near exclaimed: "O heavens, what a place!" I could only wonder at the geographical direction of his thoughts; for my thoughts were of Gehenna and the river Styx. The mangrove swamp is surely the worst that nature has ever been known to do. My feeling of disgust was intensified by many experiences of after years. Sometimes approaching a town at the ebbing tide, a strong native has carried me on his back from the boat to the solid bank, across a waste of sludge, and sometimes he has fallen in the act. Other times, when one could not wade, they have thrown me a line and have dragged me across in a canoe; and I felt that if the canoe should capsize I would sink almost forever; or, perhaps be dug up twenty thousand years hence and exhibited as a pre-historic specimen. "Every prospect pleases," reads the hymn, "and only man is vile." But the worst débris of humanity is not half so vile as the prospect of a mangrove swamp at low tide.

The death record of the Rio del Rey is appalling. Every time that I have been there—seven times—the traders that came on board looked like dying men; and often their limbs were bandaged for ulcers or kraw-kraw. I was once on board when an English missionary and his wife debarked at this place, expecting to go on up the river, beyond the swamps, to the mission station in the hills of the interior. The lady was becoming more and more fearful during the voyage, and the effect upon her of this lower river was such that she was almost hysterical. She remained on board all day until we were about to weigh the anchor. The first impression counts for much in the matter of health and resistance to the fever; and the sight of that shrinking woman going ashore in such a place was pitiable; for we all felt that she was

doomed. After a few months, however, she escaped with her life ; but she was never able to return to Africa. The mangrove swamp stretches along the greater part of the coast of West Africa, and along the rivers where the water is salt or brackish because of the flow of the tide from the sea.

The next experience after the Rio del Rey was a greater contrast than ever. We proceeded forty miles southward and called at Victoria, in the German colony of Cameroon. The harbour at Victoria is divided from the sea by a semicircle of islands, some small and some larger. One of these islands, a large barren rock, when seen from a certain part of the beach, bears a singular though grotesque resemblance to Queen Victoria as she appeared when seated upon the throne. It is presumably from this that the place was given the name *Victoria* ; for the English traders were there before Germany occupied the territory.

Immediately behind the harbour is the great Mount Cameroon, one of the greatest mountains in the world, a solitary peak, which rises immediately from the sea to a height of 13,700 feet ; which is twelve hundred feet higher than Teneriffe. It was evening as we approached, and before we had entered the harbour it was night ; for in the tropics day darkens quickly into night and there is no twilight. But on the top of the mountain, far above our night, we still saw the rose-red of the lingering day. The moon rose behind the mountain and we steered into the shadow of it closer and closer, for by night it seemed much nearer than it really was. The number of passengers had diminished to a very few, and they were silent ; not a voice was heard on the deck. It was the strangest silence I have ever experienced ; not the mere negation of sound, but like something positive, and diffused from the mountain itself ; a silence more impressive than speech ; the silence of an infinite comprehension. The

engines stopped : we were ready to cast the anchor, and I found myself wondering how the captain's voice would sound when in a moment he would shout : "Let go."

"How fit a place," someone at length remarked, "for the sounding of the last trumpet and the final judgment ! before this mountain which has looked down unchanged upon all the generations that have come and passed away since the world began."

It is not always silent, however, for the natives, with some sense of its majesty, call it the "Throne of Thunder." Fierce storms wage battle around its middle height, with terrific peals of thunder such as I have never heard elsewhere. Sometimes for many days it wraps itself in clouds and darkness, completely invisible. I was once a whole week at various ports within a few miles of it, and did not catch a glimpse of it. The clouds wrapped it about to the very base, and there was nothing to indicate that it was there except the unusual frequency of storm and thunder. Then, one day when we were at Victoria, the weather brightened so much that we expected soon to see the peak. I asked a native attendant, a young man, to watch for it and tell me if he saw it. At length, while I was sitting on deck watching for it myself, he exclaimed : "The peak ! Mr. Milligan, the peak !"

"Where ?" I said. "I don't see it."

"Look higher," he exclaimed.

"I am looking as high as I can. I am looking as high as the sky."

"Look higher than the sky," he cried, with native simplicity ; "the sky is not high."

I lifted my eyes still higher towards the zenith, and there, through an expanding rift in the heavy cloud, I saw the peak, calm, bright and beautiful, just as it had been all the time, even when hidden by low-hanging clouds. I have often thought of it since. God is higher

than our highest thought, higher than our sky. Our habits of mind and heart, even our theology may hide Him from our sight, until by some unwonted experience these are shattered, and through the rent clouds of our former sky we see the living God.

A short time before I left Africa I spent ten days at a sanitarium of the Basle Mission, on the side of Cameroon, between three and four thousand feet high. I had then been in Africa for years and had tropical blood in my veins, and I suffered much with the cold. There was so much covering on my bed that I was fairly sore with the weight of it, and yet I was cold. The storms raged frequently, hiding the heavens from those below and the earth from us; for we were above the storm-cloud, and dwelt in light and sunshine. The detonation of thunder beneath us was like the muttering rumble of an earthquake.

The German government has built a splendid road from the base of the mountain up to the sanitarium. The road is well graded, and winds upwards like a continuous S, covering a distance of sixteen miles in the ascent. I was delighted when I found that the missionaries would provide me a mule upon which I could ride up to the sanitarium. I am a lover of horses, and often during those years in Africa I had been homesick for the sight of one. The mule, when he appeared, was sleek and strong; I put my arms around his neck and patted him and caressed him as if he were a long-lost friend. Then I mounted him and started up the road, an attendant following behind with another mule and carrying my baggage. The mule which I rode was deeply imbued with Longfellow's sentiment: "Home-keeping hearts are happiest; to stay at home is best." He climbed slowly and reluctantly, and by some mysterious operation of the law of gravitation his head had a persistent tendency to

turn about and swing down the grade. I soon realized that I could go faster without him, and that the strength which I was expending in keeping him in the path of duty was greater than that which I would require in going my way alone; and I had no strength to spare. Therefore after three or four miles in his company, finding his disposition fixed and unaspiring, I dismounted, and leaving him in the road for the guide, I walked the rest of the sixteen miles.

But ten days later, when I was returning to Victoria, the same mule was again put at my disposal, and I gladly accepted him. For I was much stronger, and I was going in the direction of his own desire; and besides it was down-hill all the way, and I knew that he was too lazy to hold back. The grade was not such that there was any danger to him from running; so I galloped the sixteen miles, and had the ride of my life. I could have shouted with delight. After a few miles I took a severe pain in my side. I dismounted and lay down on the ground. In a little while I was all right again, and taking off a pair of stout suspenders I tied them as tight as possible around my waist with a large clumsy knot at my side. I had already discarded my coat, and my only upper garment was a woolen undershirt with short sleeves. The suspenders around my waist gave me a new accession of strength and I galloped all the rest of the way, with the same pleasure, and entered Victoria where I made something of a sensation. My last association, therefore, with the great mountain, was not an impression of its solemn majesty, but the memory of a jolly good ride.

I was glad when at last we reached Batanga, and the long voyage was over. Our attention was drawn to the canoes in which men were fishing, and for which Batanga is famous. The quiet morning sea was dotted with them



MISSION HOUSE AT BATANGA

within a radius of a mile around us, some of them being two miles from the shore. The Batanga canoe is the smallest on the entire coast. It is almost as light as bark; the men come to the beach in the morning carrying their canoes on their heads. It is quite an entertainment to see them going out through the surf, and I have seen a canoe capsized half a dozen times in the attempt. Later in the day, when the surf is heavier, they cannot get out at all. At sea the man straddles his canoe and lets his legs hang in the water; and in this fashion he sometimes ventures two miles from the shore.

We anchored nearly a mile from the beach and were sent ashore in a surf-boat manned by native Krumen. There is no harbour at Batanga, and the landing in the surf was the most exciting of my African experiences until that time. As we entered the surf the boat stood still for a moment, until caught up on the breast of a breaker, and—"Then, like a pawing horse let go, she made a sudden bound," and we were carried towards the beach with violent speed that looked like destruction for us all. The crest of the breaker passed under us, however, when we were close to the beach, and immediately the Krumen leaped into the water, and with all their might ran the boat up on the beach far enough to escape the next wave. Then, while most of them placed themselves around the boat to steady it, the rest of them presented their backs to the passengers and yelled at them to jump on and ride ashore.

As the pitching boat was poised for a moment, standing on the gunwale, I seized a Kruman firmly by the hair with both my hands, and leaped upon him, astride his neck with my legs over his shoulders. I had put on a fresh white suit for the occasion, notwithstanding that I had been instructed by the Old Coasters that the Kruman, with his unique sense of humour, makes it a point to

drop the new comer into the surf and present him to his friends ashore as much bedraggled and beflustered as possible. I also had on the inevitable cork helmet, so bulky, and drooping over the eyes. Most men unaccustomed to them feel as awkward as they would in a Gainsborough hat. The Krnman, I am glad to report, did not drop me; perhaps because I kept so firm a hold on his hair that he did not know how much of it he might lose by a sudden or unexpected separation from me. It was probably my own fault, and not his, that when he stooped to deposit me, I missed the trick of lighting on my feet, which I afterwards learned. I reached the ground on all fours, in the wet sand. The white helmet fell from my head and rolled off towards the sea and I followed it, running quadrupedal fashion, and snatched it from an approaching wave.

A moment later I was exchanging greetings with a group of missionaries who had gathered on the beach.

At this landing on the beach I observed that we were standing under a cocoa-palm. I looked up, and lo, there was no snake hanging from it. Now, the most vivid impression—in fact the only impression of Africa that I had carried thus far through life, except that of sunny fountains rolling down golden strands, was made by a picture in the old-fashioned geography; in which there were crowded together, with contempt of perspective, an elephant, a hippopotamns, a rhinoceros, a lion, a leopard, a gorilla, a chimpanzee, several other monkeys, and a python hanging from a tree.

“They are all here,” said some one, in explanation; “but they are not so thick on the ground as you may have supposed.”

III

BUSH TRAVEL

UPON our arrival at Batanga we at once commenced the preparations for a journey into the bush, than which nothing could have been a greater contrast to the long, idle voyage on the sea ; for our physical strength and powers of endurance were to be taxed more than ever before.

There were two others besides myself, Mr. Kerr, a new arrival, and the Rev. A. C. Good, an intrepid and consecrated missionary whose name was already known throughout the United States. Dr. Good had been twelve years in Africa, working most of the time among the Fang of the Ogowe River, but had lately come to Batanga for the purpose of opening the Bulu interior. The language of the Fang was so much like the Bulu that Dr. Good could converse with the latter from the first. Before the arrival of Mr. Kerr and myself Dr. Good had already made one journey into the Bulu country to a distance of seventy-five miles, where he chose the site of the first station, afterwards named Efulen.

In those days nearly all the distance between Efulen and the beach was covered with dense unbroken forest. None of the Bulu as far as we knew had ever been to the coast ; and no white man had ever entered that part of the interior. The Mabeya tribe, living immediately behind the coast tribe, were already in trade relations with the Bulu ; so that there were roads, that is, foot-paths, through the forest. But they were seldom used, and were only a little better than none at all. The present good bush-

road from Batanga to Efulen did not exist in those days. We made it ourselves after we had been there nearly a year, and it has been greatly improved from time to time. The first road which we followed made a great detour to the south, and we walked, according to Dr. Good's calculation, seventy-five miles from Batanga to Efulen, although the distance by the present straight road is less than sixty miles.

And, by the way, before we enter the forest, bidding a temporary farewell to civilization, we do well to take leave of this highly civilized term, "mile." It is more than superfluous in such a forest: it is positively misleading. Such roads are not measured in terms of linear distance, but only in measures of time. To say that a place is distant half a day's journey, or five hours, is to speak intelligibly; but to say that a place is five miles distant is to give not the slightest information as to the time it will take to reach it. On the few good roads which in recent years have been improved by the government one might perhaps walk thirty miles a day: on the worst roads that I have attempted I could not walk five miles a day with equal labour.

Men can now walk to Efulen in three days over the present road, and I with others have done it in that time, although in greatly reduced health; yet I was not nearly so tired as when I used to walk it in five days over the road that we first followed. The greater distance was by no means the only difference; the chief difference was in the quality of the road. The first road was so obscure that in many places we could scarcely follow it; and in some places it was so completely overgrown that we had to cut our way through, making the road as we went, for which reason we always kept men with cutlasses ahead of the caravan. Much also depends upon the season. A road might be very good and easy to travel in the dry

season, but almost, or quite, impassable in the wet season, when the forest is flooded, when the streams have become rivers and the rivers have far overspread their banks, so that the traveller is wading in water much of the time. In opening a new station we could not choose our time for travel, and it so happened that in my year and a half at Efulen I only made two round trips in the dry season.

The African forest is the greatest in the world, both in the area covered and in the density of growth. The tribes with whom I am familiar conceive of the whole world as a vast bush intersected with rivers. The tribes are moving ever from the interior towards the sea; and some of those who have long been coast tribes still retain in the idiom of their language the record of their former ignorance. The word for "river" is used to designate the sea, and "the whole world" is "the whole bush." A man will speak of his country as his "bush," and the white man's country he calls "the white man's bush." God, they say, loves "the whole bush." Heaven, or the other world, is "the other bush," and in singing "I have a Father in the promised land," they say: "I have a Father in the bush beyond."

One who is accustomed to the maple, beech, oak and pine, finds the African forest strangely unfamiliar. There are extremes of soft and hard woods; and one will soon observe that as a rule the soft woods have large leaves, while most of the hard woods have small leaves. Teak, mahogany, *lignum vitæ*, ebony and camwood are characteristic. The most striking and beautiful tree of the forest is a species of cottonwood. It grows an enormous height, with a silver-gray trunk like a column of granite, and is supported by immense buttresses. In the primeval forest, that which has not at any time been cut down for man's habitation, the foliage is very high and the gray trunks suggest the columns of a cathedral. The

branches above interlace, forming a canopy of foliage and excluding the sun. Cable vines of various sizes, many of them six or eight inches in diameter, lash the trees together, ascending the tree trunks in a spiral coil like an endless python and sometimes strangling them to death, then swinging from tree to tree in loops and coils, gnarled and twisted. The foliage and flowers of these spread through the tree tops, making the dim light below more dim, and from the swinging cables an undisciplined profusion of other vines and various hanging plants depend in festoons and draperies, all interwoven in bewildering confusion. The ground is covered with a thick compost of rotting leaves and branches and insects. Every few yards a giant tree trunk lies prostrate and is filled with myriad insects that will soon devour it.

Lightning sometimes strikes the tallest trees, which come crashing down bringing half a dozen others with them. Then in this open place where the sunlight reaches the ground there shoots up with amazing rapidity a tangled undergrowth, from which young trees race upwards to secure the light and air in such rivalry and struggle that the weak are soon strangled or crowded to death, and the battle is to the swift.

The poet William Watson in melodious verses prays for —

“The advent of that morn divine
When nations may as forests grow,
Wherein the oak hates not the pine,
Nor beeches wish the cedars woe,
But all in their unlikeness blend
Confederate to one golden end.”

No one will deny that this is beautiful poetry ; but it is deplorably false science. Nothing could be more untrue to the facts. The oak, the pine and the cedar, considered

as living things with conscious aims and individual interests (for that is how the poet would have us consider them), do hate each other with a hatred to which there is no parallel in human society. Men sacrifice for each other, and we even have martyrs. But in the forest there is no sacrifice, no martyrdom, nor do trees ever confederate; but each fights for itself in a ceaseless and savage struggle. And nowhere else in the forest world is the struggle for existence so remorseless as in the tropic zone of Africa; for nowhere else is variety so profuse and growth so rapid.

In the primeval forest the undergrowth is not dense and travel is not so difficult. But as the natives are always moving their towns and abandoning old sites, a considerable portion of the forest is the growth of a few years; and here the undergrowth is so dense and matted that there is no possibility of passing through it except as one tunnels his way with the cutlass, and the jungle closes on both sides of the path like a wall. This is the usual character of the bush along the rivers. There are not many flowers in the forest. The most common is the orchid. But flowers are numerous in the clearings and more open places. In particular there is a lovely convolvulus of delicate lavender that climbs over all the lower growth of the clearing and blooms in such profusion as to give its colour to the landscape. The impression of the beauty or the ugliness of the forest depends largely upon whether one sees it in the wet or the dry season. In the dry season, travelling on a fairly good road, the idea of the cathedral with its solemn majesty was often present with me; I was impressed with its beauty and enjoyed the solitude. But in the wet season I loathed it. Who could enjoy, or even recognize, beauty while standing knee-deep in mud? Its stillness is not the stillness that speaks to the mind and heart. It is dull and dead.

We had twenty-eight native carriers (whom we must call *porters* when speaking to Englishmen) each with a load of about forty pounds. They often carry more than twice that weight over the present road to Efulen; seventy pounds is the standard load. But besides the better roads there is also this great difference that the natives were at that time new to the work of carrying heavy loads, to which they have since become accustomed. The present young men have grown up in the work. Besides our personal effects and food supplies we carried trade-goods, with which to buy food and building material from the natives, and to pay native workmen. There was no currency in that interior tribe. We paid out principally salt, beads, and brass rods, the latter used for ornaments for the legs and arms. After a year there was some demand for cloth—highly coloured prints—and other articles for which there was no use at first.

We were dressed in suits of denim or other cheap material. I bought my suit at a trading-house in Batanga for two dollars, and packed away all my better clothing. Beneath the coat I wore a heavy woollen undershirt, the only proper kind for the tropics, and proper all the time, no matter what else one may choose or discard. We were glad to discard the helmet while travelling in the forest, and to substitute a felt hat. Tastes differ widely as to the best footwear; but I like best for such a road a pair of canvas shoes with rubber soles, alternating with stout leather shoes every second or third day. Each man carries a wooden stick or staff about five feet in length. When a man has chosen and trimmed for himself a stick that exactly suits him, he becomes attached to it with a sentimental regard, according to the distance he has travelled with it and the journeys he has made. He is sensitive to any criticism passed upon it; and no experienced bush-traveller will make disparaging remarks

about another man's staff, but around the camp-fire they will vie with each other in praising each his own. I remember mine very well and I would give much to have it now.

Perhaps this attachment is the stronger because, as a rule, we do not carry watches in that country. Most watches will run only for a short time. A fine gold watch is the most useless of all ; the very cheapest will run longest. When I began to tell this in America, I found that I was sacrificing my reputation for accuracy of statement : whereupon I stated the facts to a jeweller who, after consideration, said there was a very plain explanation, namely, that the hair-spring of the more expensive movements is usually finer and more closely coiled than that of the cheaper watches, so fine that the least rust upon it would interfere with its motion.

Our outfit for the road was very light. This was Dr. Good's habit and with me it was a kind of instinct. We were measuring our strength against the forces of the forest, testing our ability to endure and to wrest from the forest itself the means of enduring. Having this feeling, to carry along the ready-made comforts of civilization seems like taking a mean advantage of nature. Some few things must be taken. But the opinions of the wisest differ as to what those few things should be, and each man ardently believes in, and advocates his own outfit. The explanation is that nothing of the outfit except food is an absolute necessity. Other things, however important, are of the nature of comforts ; and what is necessary to one man's comfort, another can often do without.

One may suggest for such a journey a good water-proof bag containing a sweater, extra socks and pajamas, and two blankets. A good rubber blanket is a necessity if one expects to sleep in the open forest. Canned foods, of course, are used, and for cooking utensils, a frying-pan

and a sauce-pan will suffice for three, and a cup, tin plate, knife, fork and spoon for each. Several cutlasses are necessary for clearing the road, preparing beds, cutting fire-wood and other uses. Matches also must be taken and kept in a dry place. A few towels and toilet articles complete the necessary outfit. On our first journey we took camp-beds, but only because we had need of them at Efulen. I never carried one again.

Besides this general and common outfit each man nearly always has some one article that nobody else carries but himself, and that, in his mind, is more important than anything else. I do not remember what Mr. Kerr's *indispensable* was, for we never walked together except this once, it being necessary that either one of us should stay at the station. Mine, however, was a pair of leather gloves, at which Dr. Good used to laugh ; for we travelled often together. But they saved me much loss of blood and the pain of torn hands from the brambles and long briers that stretched across the path, and they also enabled me to protect my face from them by pushing them aside better than I could have done with bare hands. Dr. Good's *indispensable* was a mosquito-net with canopy and sides which he also urged upon me as a necessity and which I insisted was a superfluity. There were no mosquitoes in our camping-places in the forest ; but he used the net to protect against damp and against any slight motion of the air, for one takes cold very easily and the least cold is liable to induce fever. We had many a good-natured "scrap" over these hobbies ; but neither of us ever converted the other. There was, however, one article with which I was always well supplied and for which Dr. Good himself usually thanked me before the end of a journey, and that was the *indispensable* safety-pin. I never foresaw any particular use for it, but many uses unforeseen invariably emerged as we travelled. Some

travellers carry a piece of oiled baize in a convenient and accessible place. It can be used to sit down on ; for one can never sit on the ground, even if it is dry, because of insects. But its special use is for an apron, which is attached with safety-pins and worn in the morning through the dripping shrubbery. If one is wearing high shoes he can even keep his feet dry by this means.

The road that threads the forest from Batanga to Efulen was a narrow foot-path twelve inches wide and poorly beaten. The wet season had begun and the rains had been falling two or three weeks. The road was not even as good as we had expected ; for Dr. Good, who had fully described it, had passed over it at the end of the dry season, when the road was at the best. The typical African road is a contorted line that vacillates and swerves to right and left, turning and twisting at acute angles continually, and often for no apparent reason, as if it had been made by some crazy person. But in such cases there was always an original reason even when it no longer exists. For instance, the native carrying a load finds a tree fallen across the path. It is easier for him with his load to go around it than to climb over it. But a log does not remain long in an African forest. Between insects and rot it is soon demolished. Meantime, along its length there has grown up a dense undergrowth ; and rather than cut through this the native keeps to the path, now beaten, which passed around the log ; and the new traveller wonders why the path should not be straight. It is estimated that an African road is a third longer in each mile by reason of its crookedness. But this is not the only peculiarity of a forest path. African trees have enormous roots, and much of them is above ground. This is the chief obstruction, and there are many others.

No two successive steps are the same length, nor upon

the same level. If the attention is diverted for a moment, one may stumble and fall. The road carefully avoids the hills and keeps down in the lowest parts. The natives, carrying loads, dislike climbing, but they have not the least aversion to mud ; indeed, it has some advantages for their bare feet. One passes through every variety of it and every depth. The road often follows the bed of a stream for a distance, a foot or more under water or in mud, according to the season. Meanwhile, the part of the traveller that is above ground is kept moist by the dripping shrubbery that meets across the path. Many of the shrubs are covered with thorns, spines and hooks. One of the worst of these, armed with sharp spikes and not easy to see because it bears but little foliage, sprawls across the path just high enough to catch the average man under the chin, where it leaves a mark that looks as if it might have been made with a cross-cut saw. Then, again, there are long stretches of road that are not any worse than crossing a ploughed field after a rain. Every day, and sometimes several times a day, we forded streams, often wading to the waist, and we rather enjoyed it after the mud.

The deeper ravines we crossed on bridges. Bridge-building in Africa is no great triumph of mechanical engineering. The bridges which crossed the narrower ravines and gorges consisted simply of several long, slender poles laid down side by side. They ought to be on a level but are not. One is six inches or a foot higher than the other, and there is so much spring in them that the feat of crossing is equal to a tight-rope performance. Over extensively flooded areas where the water is too deep to wade, a bridge of single poles is supported in forked uprights at intervals of the length of the poles, and above the bridge a rope of vine is stretched to hold with the hand. It happened more than once that by

some mishap we tumbled into the stream below ; but the natives were quick to fish us out.

The worst part of the journey was on the last day, through the new clearings which the natives had made for their gardens. In these the whole forest lay prostrate,—trees great and small, the tangled mass of vines, and all the débris made by its crashing fall. The whole enormous mass is left lying until the lighter parts of it dry : then it is burned over. This burning is repeated at long intervals until at length much of it is burned away. But by this time the natives are perhaps thinking of deserting it and making a new garden somewhere else, or they may have moved their town away. Meanwhile, they somehow reach the ground and plant their cassava which flourishes in the fresh, rich soil. The difficulty in an African garden is not to get things to grow, but to keep other things from growing. They never hesitate to fell the forest thus across the road, obstructing the caravans and bringing curses on their heads.

One might think on approaching a town through one of these clearings that it had been made as a formidable defense in time of war. To go through it is a tedious and exhausting trial. One moment the traveller is crawling on all fours under a log ; then he walks up the inclined trunk of a tree a distance of fifty feet, then turns and follows one of its branches, from this leaps to a branch of another tree which he follows down to the trunk, which is perhaps ten feet above the ground, while below him are upright sticks or broken branches upon which he may be impaled if he falls, or at least badly bruised. From this he mounts a cross-log and proceeds downwards to another which he follows until it brings him five feet from the ground, when he jumps the rest of the way, crawls under another log, proceeds a few yards on the ground, mounts another log, follows it until he

finds himself again six feet off the ground and wondering how he will reach it ; but the next moment he has already reached it and wonders how he got there. Then he does this all over again, and then again. I never passed through such a clearing without getting bruised or hurt in some way. The natives with their bare feet climb over these smooth logs better than the white man with his shoes unless they have rubber soles ; in the morning before the dew has dried it is especially hard. It is much harder from the fact that we are no longer in the shade of the forest, but exposed to the fierce tropical sun unrelieved by the least breeze because of the surrounding forest.

A caravan with their heavy loads, walking through such a forest ruin, presents a picturesque scene to the spectator. Some are crawling under logs, some are climbing on top of them, half a dozen are walking in procession up an inclined trunk, some are walking a log ten feet in the air, others are twisting their way through a maze of branches and some have fallen to the ground. With such a clearing in mind, and remembering what has been said about African bridges, the reader will not be likely to ask the oft-repeated question, why donkeys and horses are not more used. The use of either would necessitate the carrying of a derrick with rope and tackle.

This recalls to my mind an occasion some years afterwards that afforded high amusement to some friends of mine. I had been home in America for several years and was about to go to Africa a second time when I received a visit from Mr. Kerr, who was home on furlough. He gave me an enthusiastic account of the work done by the German government in improving the Bulu roads, —although it was perhaps the road to Lolodorf rather than that to Efulen of which he was speaking. He declared that as compared with the first roads that he and

I had travelled, I would never recognize it as an African road ; for it was "grand,"—"simply grand."

With an outburst of enthusiasm I replied that since I might be appointed to that station, and since the road was "simply grand," I would buy a pair of donkeys at the Canary Islands and take them with me.

"Man alive!" he exclaimed, "one would think you had never been in Africa ; a donkey couldn't get over it."

To my friends it was a hopeless paradox that a road could be "simply grand," and yet be impassable to a donkey. Nevertheless, about that time they began using donkeys on the road to Efulen, so much had the roads been improved in the intervening years, and they have been using them more and more since that time. There is difficulty, however, in getting them over the streams and ravines, and I am not sure whether they are used to advantage in the wet season.

Only experience will teach a man to walk the bush-road with the least effort ; and some never learn. I can remember yet how on that first morning I shrunk from the water and the mud, trying to keep my feet dry and my clothes clean. I think Mr. Kerr had more sense from the beginning. I, however, was in a state of rigidity, both physical and mental, that would soon have exhausted me. But after a while a kindly Providence took me in hand, sending upon me a rapid succession of blessings in disguise. The mud lay deep in the path and I was trying to straddle it as I walked, when, as I sprang forward to clear a wider space, some demon was evidently permitted to catch my foot and throw it up, with the result that I landed full length on my back in the mud. A few minutes later the same impalpable enemy tripped me and I fell headlong on my stomach. Still later we reached a broad, black, quiescent pond of water of the consistency of molasses.

"Can you swim?" said Dr. Good to me; "I forgot to ask you that."

"Yes," said I, thinking of the glowing description he had given me of the road, "there were several things you forgot to ask me, and some things you forgot to tell. But even if I could not swim in clear water, I could probably swim in that pond."

We plunged in and were able to wade through it.

Shortly after this a drenching rain fell, a tropical down-pour, that wet us to the skin. In this rain we stood and ate our first lunch, some fresh biscuits which one of the ladies at Batanga had baked that morning, saying as she tied them up for us in heavy oil paper, that it would be the last food of that sort that we would taste for a long time. But when the rain came on, the native carrier who had them in charge appropriated the oil paper to carry his shirt in, leaving the biscuits exposed to the rain. As we stood eating them while it still rained, it was with mitigated sorrow we reflected that it would be the last of that sort we would taste for a long time. I will admit that this was a dreary outset, but it was not unfortunate. My tenderfoot rigidity had completely relaxed for the remainder of the day. I cared not what happened afterwards, and walked without timidity, fearing neither mud nor water, nor height, nor depth, nor any such thing.

No amount of experience and practice in walking long distances on our public roads at home will insure success in walking a bush-path. In the latter there are constant obstructions and frequent annoyances, the obstructions requiring a peculiar physical aptitude, the annoyances a peculiar mental aptitude. The native possesses both aptitudes to a marvellous degree. The average native, carrying on his back a load of forty pounds, can keep up with the average white man carrying nothing. Yet, I have no doubt that on a turnpike, neither of them carry-

ing anything, the average white man would equal the native and perhaps outwalk him. It must also be remembered that the white man is in a hostile climate in Africa, and is never normally strong.

We started in the morning as soon as it was light enough to see the path, that is, about six o'clock, and walked eight or nine hours a day, stopping an hour at noon. We walked at a very rapid pace, almost on a run where the path would permit. About four o'clock we stopped for the day, usually at a camping-ground made by the natives in carrying produce from the interior. These camps were open glades surrounded by the forest wall and ceiled by the blue sky.

Two or three nights we camped beside a flowing stream, a hidden brook, that "all night to the sleeping woods sang a quiet tune."

After sitting ten minutes I followed along a short distance till I found an inviting spot where the pellucid stream widened and spread over a sand bottom, and there, all mud-bespattered, perspiring, weary and sore, I lay down in the cool, running stream, with my clothes on. Does the reader know what luxury is? Certainly not, unless after eight or nine hours of walking and wading over such a road he has lain down in a cool stream with his clothes on. I turn my face to one side and then the other, and let the flowing water caress my cheek, and as it washes away the mire from my clothing, it also soothes the weary limbs and sore joints and smooths out the wrinkles of care; and my heart answers back in a song to the murmur of its music. This is the ancient Lethean stream in which the weary and the aged bathed and became oblivious of pain and sorrow. After a bath I get into woollen pajamas and slippers, and sit down a little later to the best repast of modern times—an absolutely unlimited quantity of boiled rice and corned beef. "Is

this really corned beef?" said I; "it tastes like angel." Does the reader know what luxury is? Not unless after such a journey he has sat down to such a meal. For luxury is not something objective in the thing that we enjoy, but in the keenness of our relish; and that depends upon contrast—in this instance the contrast of rest and food with hard and hungry endurance. A few days after reaching New York, I attended a banquet at which was served I know not how many courses, the richest and the best. Objectively, it was everything that ingenuity could devise; only keen-edged appetite was wanting. And I was saying within me to my fellow guests: "Ah! I have a secret that you know not. This is only a taste of luxury; but if you would enjoy it to the full measure of your capacity, you must follow me eight hours through the fell roads of the jungle, bathe in running water, get into woollen pajamas, and then sit down in an arboreal *salle à manger* to a banquet of unlimited rice and corned beef.

We usually slept under booths made from the boughs of trees which we found in most of the camps. The most primitive bed and that which we sometimes used, was made by cutting slender, round poles six feet long and laying them side by side on two cross-sticks at the head and foot. The native carrier sleeps on this bed of poles with nothing under him and nothing over him; but when possible he keeps a fire beside him. We white men were wrapped in a blanket or two. But the use of such a bed is not wise when it can be avoided, and it is seldom necessary. More than once some one unable to sleep had to rise in the dark, find one or two bags in which loads were packed, spill the contents on the ground (making such a noise that one suddenly waking might suppose that an elephant had charged the camp) and spread the bags upon the bed in the hope of subduing the effect of its knots and

depressions and its general hardness. I soon discarded that sort of bed and preferred to bivouac in a hammock of stout and stiff canvas, suspended between two trees, with a rope stretched taut above it upon which I threw a large and light rubber blanket which formed a gable over me. This was, at least for me, the most comfortable and luxurious bush-bed that I ever slept in.

But in the early morning of the second day both comfort and luxury seemed remote and unrealizable ideas. There is a miserable chill in the forest at five o'clock in the morning that always makes one reluctant to leave his warm blankets; and on that morning it was raining. After coming out of the stream the night before, I had wrung out of my clothes what water I could, and they remained without further drying until I put them on in the morning to the accompaniment of chattering teeth, for they seemed as cold as ice. The boys' fires had all gone out and we ate some boiled rice left over from the night before—ate it standing; for sitting down one's clothes will get next to him, but standing up one can shrink away from them, or, at least, he can try. After some experience I was almost able to stand up in a suit of clothes without letting them touch me. Everything was wet and cold and the branches and shrubs shook water on us. There is a right way and a wrong way to conquer the ill-will of such a morning. The wrong way is to confess your misery, to shiver and shrink and try to save yourself. The right way is to plunge into it suddenly, get wet as quickly as possible, step lively, and make believe that you like it. The power of this mental attitude is astonishing, and with a little determination you will soon be master of the situation.

Before the end of the second day we discovered that the native stomach is made of the finest kind of rubber. Before leaving Batanga we had given to each carrier a sup-

ply of food for seven days, and before the end of the second day, some of them had eaten it all. That meant hunger and trouble for all those "foolish virgins" for the rest of the journey. It also meant trouble for us. The others divided with them, as they nearly always do when this happens. But still they did not have enough and all were hungry before the end of the journey. In consequence they were too weak to carry their loads. They lagged behind and grumbled continually, and sometimes they seemed on the point of refusing to go on. The difference between a good carrier and a poor one is often simply this, that the one stops eating when he is full and the other stops only when the supply of food is exhausted.

IV

BUSH PERILS

"By what I have read in books, I think few that have held a pen were ever really wearied, or they would write of it more strongly."

—*Robert Louis Stevenson.*

SEVERAL months later Dr. Good and I returned from the interior to Batanga, passing over the road at its very worst. It was near the end of the wet season. For many weeks the rains had fallen day and night. The forest was flooded; the streams were rushing rivers, and the rivers had far overspread their banks. Beyond these floods were marshes which were still worse. Where the water was too deep to be waded, temporary bridges such as I have described had been constructed, consisting of a single line of poles extending from one support to another, sometimes two or three feet under the water, with a rope of vine stretched a few feet above that one might hold with his hand. These bridges were more simple than ingenious, and more ingenious than safe. A number of times the vine above broke, upon which we lost our balance and fell into the water but were rescued by a life-saving crew of the carriers. For in crossing the worst places we always waited for the carriers. Nor did we proceed until we saw all the loads over safely. One or two crossed at a time and the others, having laid down their loads, stood by to be of service in case of accident. In one place when we were crossing a rushing stream in which the bridge was buried two feet under the water, the line of poles beneath our

feet suddenly came to an end, having been swept away by the current, and we crossed the deepest part on the upper vine alone going hand over hand until our feet came in contact with another pole. But this let us down into the water almost to our necks. In another place, crossing a considerable stretch of water, the bridge was such that Dr. Good preferred to cross by climbing the trees and passing along the interlacing branches.

We were seven days on the way between Efulen and Batanga, including a Sunday on which we rested. I was a convalescent, having recently been sick with a very severe fever that had kept me in bed for more than a month, and I was still weak. Indeed, the reason for hurrying to the coast at this time instead of waiting for the dry season was chiefly my need of a physician. The first day I walked four hours very slowly and could do no more; but my strength increased greatly on the way and we walked further each day.

On that journey we had to use the cutlasses very often to clear the road so as to make it passable; and one day we found the road so flooded that we were obliged to leave it and for several hours we cut our way through the matted undergrowth where there was no road; but it was very slow work. That same day Dr. Good, in jumping over a muddy place, lighted on a slippery stick that was hidden beneath the surface and fell headlong. I was following so close behind that I was already in mid-air when he fell; and, of course, I tripped over him and fell too. For a few seconds at least we were a sorry sight. There was a stream near by, however, and we washed away the portion of German territory that clung to us, and made a presentable toilet.

But Dr. Good had fallen on a projecting root and had hurt his side quite badly. It was like him to say nothing about it until, as we stood at the stream, I observed

that he was pale. Then he told me that he had hurt himself and that there was a pain in his side. He thought that a band tied around his waist would relieve him ; so I peeled a strip of bark four inches wide from a tree and tied it tight around him, over his coat, making a bow at his back. Considered æsthetically it left much to be desired, but it served the purpose. He walked with difficulty the first hour or two ; then the pain gradually subsided, and although he was bruised, it occasioned him no further trouble.

On the last night of our long immurement in the forest, we camped for the first time in an open glade where the sun had warmed and dried the ground, and the wood also was dry enough to enable us to have a big camp-fire. We kept the fire all night, and for the first time on the way got our clothes well dried. Not only were they dry ; they were even warm when we dressed in the morning. We were in high spirits and greatly enjoyed our breakfast. But immediately upon starting out, and before our blood was in vigorous circulation, we came to a long stretch of water covering acres of ground. We were greatly surprised at this, for Dr. Good knew this place and had not expected any such thing. The explanation, as we found two hours later, was that a little town had just been built near by and the people, being at war with their neighbours, had dammed a stream so as to surround their town with water and marsh for defense against the approach of their enemies. This unsightly and disgusting place they were very proud of as serving admirably their purpose of safety.

When we came to the water we waded in and walked on and on not knowing its extent. But at last we were in almost to our shoulders, and Dr. Good suggested that I should wait while he looked for the road, for he knew the way better than I. It was long before he found it and I

stood for an hour in the water. I had never felt any ill effects from wading water, but now I was standing, not wading ; and I had not done any walking that morning to invigorate me. Before we had proceeded far after leaving the water, my joints were stiff and muscles sore, especially the tendons of the heel and the knee, and every step cost pain. But we had the longest day of all before us, and our food supply being exhausted, we must reach Batanga that night. It was a day I shall never forget. To the pain of aching joints and sore muscles was soon added that of exhaustion. It happened that I had been quoting Heine and passing severe moral verdicts upon him for saying somewhere—"Psychical pain is more easily borne than physical ; and if I had my choice between a bad conscience and a bad tooth, I should choose the former." This, no doubt, is pure paganism ; but now when I was suffering something of the weakness and pain that poor Heine endured, I am afraid that if I had been offered a bad conscience in exchange for physical suffering, with the sure promise that I could get my better conscience back again at the beach, I might have succumbed to the temptation. Thank God that in the crises we seldom have the choice. At any rate, Heine did not seem so much of a pagan that day as when I sat by the warm camp-fire the night before descanting on another's pain, and Dr. Good did not have to listen to further moral dissertations on my part. Hours before we reached the beach my legs were fainting under me but still we walked on with long strides and at the usual rapid pace, threading the forest while hour was added to hour.

We did not take our usual noonday rest, for we both knew that if I should stop walking for a little while I would be unable to go on. We usually chatted together as we walked, but that day from noon until we reached the beach, I do not recall that a word was spoken. Dr.

Good was too wise to express the sympathy that I knew he felt. We had always taken turns in setting the pace ; but at noon I said to him : “ You go ahead ; I am not equal to the extra mental exertion of setting the pace : it will be easier for me to keep up with you.”

The last hour of that interminable day was through a grass field where we were exposed to the sun and the heat. The rank grass was much higher than our heads and intercepted the sea-breeze. It also cut my arms and face till I was covered with blood ; for I was too tired to protect myself. Each successive step required a new decision, and an effort involving the utmost conjoint exertion of mind and body. My teeth were set and I was breathing audibly. At last we entered a native town and as we passed through the long street, the people and their chief, Bivinia, came trooping forward with cordial greetings and hands extended towards us ; but I neither extended my hand nor replied to their salutations. Indeed, my mind was so concentrated on the effort that it required to keep on walking that I was only half-conscious of the presence and attention of the natives ; they were like forms moving to and fro in an uneasy dream. But the longest day has an end. We reached Dr. Good's house and I threw myself into a chair while he dispatched a messenger to Mr. Gault who lived two miles further, asking Mr. Gault to send men with a hammock to carry me on to his house where I was going to stay.

It is doubtful whether one ever recovers from such an unnatural straining of nerves and muscles. The muscles in a few days may regain their elasticity and the joints their suppleness ; but somewhat of the power of endurance is lost and especially the quality of resiliency, the power of quickly recovering from mental or physical prostration, leaving one an easier victim of virulent disease ; and nerves so overwrought may from time to time

wreak the vengeance of untold misery through all the after years.

During the following dry season we employed a force of men in making a new road, the present road from Batanga to Efulen. It is practically straight, and therefore much shorter than the old road, so that a good walker can make the journey in three days. Moreover, it follows higher ground and is more dry. We also cut down many trees along the way, which relieved the gloom, although the road still passes beneath a leafy arcade sufficient to protect from the sun. We improved the bridges and wherever possible made a bridge by felling a tree. But the native roads, except the few that have been improved by white men, are still such as I have described. It happened also that most of our journeys were at first made in the wet season. After the first year, however, that was no longer necessary, and we began to feel that the pioneer period was drawing to a close. But I presume that those who now live at Efulen and other interior stations, in journeys to the further interior, especially to towns off the main road, if they travel in the wet season, find just such roads as we first travelled.

The last time I walked from Efulen during my first term in Africa, I enjoyed the journey. The forest was more dry than I had believed it could be. The ground was strewn with leaves suggestive of our autumn. Nor was it dark and depressing as before. Upon the forest-canopy of green, supported by tall columns of sombre gray, the light danced and played like sunshine on rippling water and shone through in silvery streams and shifting golden bars. The forest floor was a humus of soft mould and light, dry leaves. The low green undergrowth, closing the path before and behind me, now that it was not dripping with water, was attractive, and gave a pleasant sense of privacy combining with the subtle

sense of companionship with the vast life of the great forest. For it was no longer the dead, repellent jungle of some months ago, but a real forest in which one loves to walk alone, a forest full of mystery and spiritual suggestion, whose stillness speaks to us in a language that we strive to understand, or gives, as Tennyson says, "A hint of somewhat unexpressed:"

" 'Tis not alone the warbling woods,
The starred abysses of the sky,
The silent hills, the stormy floods,
The green, that fills the eye.—
These only do not move the breast;
Like some wise Artist, Nature gives
Through all her works, to each that lives,
A hint of somewhat unexpressed."

In setting out from Efulen we always had a "palaver" with the carriers which in one instance, at least, threatened to become a fight. Dr. Good on his first journey before my arrival in Africa had paid the carriers a certain amount for the round trip; for they had to carry their loads both ways. One can scarcely overestimate the authority of *precedent* in Africa. The citation of a precedent is sufficient to justify any subsequent action that may be to the advantage of him who cites it, even though the action be flagitious and the precedent only remotely relevant. A single precedent may establish a custom and established custom is a despot from whom there is no appeal, and whose authority transcends moral law. A Kruman, if asked why he does this or that, thinks that he gives the most lucid explanation when he answers: "It be fashion for we country." We had expected to pay our carriers from Batanga to Efulen less than Dr. Good had paid, since they were carrying loads only one way. But his one trip had established the

amount of pay, and at the first mention of lower prices there was a storm of protest accompanied by scathing moral observations. It made no difference to them, they averred, whether or not they carried loads both ways; they would just as soon walk with a load as without one, and indeed a little rather. We had no alternative, so we paid the full price of a round trip; but we stipulated that if at any time we should wish to send loads from the interior to Batanga, we should require the carriers to take them without any additional pay; and to this they cordially agreed.

It was seldom that we had anything but mail to send to Batanga, except when one of ourselves was going, and then we usually had four or five loads. But there were always several times this number of carriers. Some few, therefore, must be selected to carry the loads, while the rest walked light. It was natural, I suppose, that when they knew a white man was going back with them to Batanga they should all pretend to be sick in order to escape carrying a load. So sure as they heard me coming towards their house in the early morning to choose several carriers, immediately they presented such a spectacle of suffering as was never seen in any hospital. It was very perplexing for almost invariably some one or two of them were really sick and quite unfit to carry loads. On one occasion as I approached, the scene was more heartrending than usual. There were moans and cries and shrieks such as might issue from a railroad wreck in which a score of broken and mangled human beings were pinioned by the wreckage. I found them sitting and lying around in every posture of pain. Some were nursing sore feet and sprained ankles, some had violent attacks of indigestion, several had fever, and one had a fit. Each one was occupied with his own suffering and betrayed no consciousness of my presence.

After looking around I walked out without speaking. I made a bold guess as to the sick and the well ; and returning a few minutes later, followed by several workmen with the loads, I advanced as if by some occult means I knew exactly the degree of sincerity or insincerity on the part of each, and placed the heaviest load in front of a certain man, saying quietly : "You will carry this load." Now it happened that this was the only sick man in the crowd and he was quite unfit to carry anything. The truth is that the man, being really sick, did not call in the assistance of dramatic art, and he made less fuss than any of the others. We were not many hours on the way before I discovered the mistake I had made. It is very difficult to make any change on the road, and is regarded as something less than fair. To accomplish it without a mutiny one must assume a terrifying countenance of the utmost ferocity and cannibalism. In this I was evidently successful ; for late in the afternoon I suddenly called a halt, waited until all the men came up, and then ordered a man to take the load off the back of the sick man and put it on the man who that morning had been seized with a fit at my approach. This I did with the more relish because I had heard him chuckling about it along the way and telling the joke on the white man.

We seldom saw an animal in the forest, although we knew they were there. The only monkey that we saw on our first journey Mr. Kerr shot and gave to the carriers who ate every part of it, inside and out, including the skin—after burning off the hair. We sometimes heard the blood-curdling night-cry of the leopard ; but we never saw one. On several occasions when I was alone I heard elephants plunging along the path before me, or suddenly discovered their tracks at my feet, so fresh that the water was still trickling into them. The elephant is not dangerous unless one comes upon him suddenly and startles

or frightens him ; but if he "charges," he is terrible. A chief near Efulen was one day walking in the forest at the head of a hunting party. At a point where the path suddenly swerved around the upturned root of a tree, he found himself face to face with an elephant. Before he had time to fire the elephant instantly charged. It put its tusk through his body and then trampled him to death under its feet. The natives taught me, when I heard elephants ahead, to stop and shout until there was complete silence ; which meant that they had hidden in the forest and I could pass along the path in perfect safety, no matter how near they might be. But the first time that this occurred, and the second time, I made the natives prove their advice by going ahead themselves, which they never hesitated to do.

In the wet season I always walked in company with the caravan ; but in the dry season I preferred to walk alone, and often left the carriers far behind me, scattered along the road in different groups. At a fork in the road I always threw a handful of fresh leaves upon the road that I followed, as a sign to the carriers that they might be sure to take the same way. Never but once did they fail to follow me. On that occasion some of the carriers were boys of a strange tribe, the Galway, more used to waterways than to bush roads. Until the last evening they had walked behind others who were familiar with bush travel and whom they could follow heedlessly. But that evening it happened that the Galway were ahead and they took the wrong road, not observing my sign of the leaves on the path, and the whole caravan went astray except two carriers who were far behind and separated from the others. To follow their misfortune to the issue, the Galway got separated from the rest of the caravan and arrived at Batanga two days late, famished with hunger and frightened half to death.

Meanwhile, I had walked on far ahead until I thought that the carriers might require all the daylight that was left to catch me, and then I stopped and waited for them ; though I had not yet reached the camp. As time passed and no carriers appeared I began to feel uneasy. The chill of the evening was approaching, and I had not even a coat ; so I began to walk back and forth rapidly to keep warm. Finally, two carriers arrived. One of them had my food, which was fortunate ; but the other had nothing that I wanted on the road. The lost Galway had my bed and extra clothing, and even the matches. We waited for them anxiously and called loudly, but there was no answer. Then swiftly, as always in the forest of the tropics, the day turned into night : "At one stride comes the dark." A heavy, palpable darkness, like smoke, enshrouded us and rose higher till it blotted out the leafy canopy and blackened the very sky. The opacity of the darkness was such that we could not see each other, nor could I see my hand when I placed it before my eyes.

For a while I forgot the loss of the other carriers in thankfulness for the company of these two men. For, however kindly the mood of the forest by day, or however joyful the camp-fire by night in congenial company, yet, to one alone through the night, without comfort or means of rest, and with the possibility of being lost, the forest is truly dreadful. One in such a plight interprets the forest through the medium of his misery and his fear. The intolerable vastness of his prison dungeon suggests the "outer darkness," and the experience of a soul forsaken. I was miserably cold and had nothing to protect me ; nor had I a bed except a rubber blanket. I kept walking back and forth on a bit of path a few yards long, notwithstanding that I had walked all day. There was but little rest. Occasionally I threw myself down on the

rubber blanket but was so cold that before long I rose again and began walking. Fortunately I was in unusually good health, for Africa, or the exposure might have resulted even more seriously than it did. My cook, Eyambe, a Batanga man, who had worked for us at Efulen for several months, possessed the remnant of a shirt, so much prized that he had carried it with him to the bush, lest his numerous relatives, male and female, should wear it out in his absence. He came to me in the darkness feeling his way, and said, "Mr. Milligan, my shirt, you must take him and wear him, please. This bush he no be too bad for we black man ; but my heart ery for white man."

I took it, of course, and wore it. But the cheer that I derived from the kindness of his heart was greater than the poor comfort of the shirt.

I thanked God when morning dawned at last ; but it is unnecessary to say that I was in poor condition for walking next day, the last day of the journey. I knew that the exposure would bring on fever and I walked more rapidly than usual so as to reach Batanga as soon as possible. I sometimes even ran, as if in precipitate flight from a pursuing beast. The part of the road over which I passed that day was quite new and poorly cleared. My clothing may not have been stout enough to withstand the thorns and briars which I encountered ; or else, in my hurry, I was reckless. At any rate, when I emerged from the forest, behind Mr. Gault's house, one leg of my trousers was gone from above the knee, and the other leg was also exposed through several rents, the remainder of the trousers being fastened with numerous safety-pins. I was also scratched and bleeding more than on any previous trip.

As I turned and looked back from the beach towards the gloomy and sullen forest, in the vivid realization of

the exposure of that long night and the fever which I knew was imminent, I had the feeling which Stanley describes when he and his long caravan emerged from the dark prison forest after the immurement of several months, in which scores of their comrades had died by the way, the whole caravan now enfeebled and wasted with hunger, the black, glossy skin turned an ashen gray. They ascended a hill and first looking up yearningly towards the bright blue sky, they then turned with a sigh and looked back over the sable forest that heaved away to the infinity of the west. In their sudden exaltation they shook their clenched fists at it, uttering imprecations, and with gestures of defiance and hate. They apostrophized it for its cruelty to themselves and their kinsmen; they compared it to hell, and accused it of the murder of a hundred of their comrades. But the forest which lay vast as a continent before them, and drowsy, like a great beast, answered not a word, but rested in its infinite sullenness, remorseless and implacable.

I was not mistaken in my apprehension of fever. I did not return to Efulen again. One fever followed another in quick succession, becoming at length so serious that my fellow missionaries at Batanga united in urging me not to risk another attack. An English steamer on the outward voyage called just at that time and I went south to Gaboon, where I sailed on a French steamer for Marseilles and thence home.

Little did I think when I was leaving Efulen for a few days, as I supposed, that I was really taking a long leave of Efulen and Africa, not again to see either for four years, and never again to see Dr. Good. That last morning, when I was setting out for the beach, he walked with me down the long Efulen hill to the foot, where we stood perhaps half an hour, formulating our expectations and making the clearest of plans, none of which were

realized, although they pertained to the immediate future.

The element of accident is a constant factor in Africa, that continually changes the course of our reckoning and overturns our surest calculations. Accidents are no more numerous there than elsewhere, but they are more serious. Climbing a mountainside, a slip of the foot is fraught with more danger than on a level road. In the hostile climate of Africa, the smallest accident, a moment's in-caution or forgetfulness on your own part or on the part of others, may change the entire future. Elsewhere the best-laid plans of men have about an equal chance with the best-laid plans of mice, if the observation of Burns is to be trusted. But in Africa the probability of the future is entirely with the mice.

While I was in Africa a second time and living in Gaboon, two hundred miles further south on the coast, I visited Efulen once more. The road was much more improved than when I had seen it last. The sun shone through the arcade of vines and branches and formed upon the pathway a filigree of gold and silver light. The mode of travel was different accordingly. It was the best time of the year and there was a happy party of eleven, so that the journey was like a continuous picnic. Four of the party were ladies, three of whom were carried in hammocks and one rode a donkey. Besides, and chiefly, there was a very sweet little girl, two years old—a little splash of golden sunshine in the gray forest light, a dream of home, a fragment of a song— Ah me ! how lonely one becomes for the sight of a white child when he has lived some years in the jungles ! Much of the time the ladies were walking and the hammocks empty. The hammock is suspended from a long bamboo pole borne upon the shoulders of two carriers. But the carriers must be relieved frequently, for it is dreadfully hard work. Six of



LITTLE FRANCES, BORN IN AFRICA.

*Ah me, how lonely one becomes for the sight of a white child
when he has lived some years in the jungles!*

the strongest native men are required for one hammock. Little Lois also had her special hammock, with a firm floor in it, so that she could sit upright, and she was perfectly happy when riding through the forest.

Several towns had been built along the way and in one of them we stopped each night, where we occupied native houses and slept on native beds of straight bamboo poles covered with armfuls of grass—as good a bed as one could desire. The numerous ticks in the grass were converted into bed-ticks—such was our resourcefulness of expedient. The only dislikable part of the journey was rising so early in the morning when we could have slept on for hours, after the walk of the preceding day. But an incident of that journey impressed it distinctly upon my mind that there is some advantage in eating breakfast before daylight. One morning we had an oatmeal breakfast. The day dawned upon two tardy boarders before they had eaten and they were horrified at discovering that the oatmeal was full of vermiform animalcules. Of course, they could not eat it and had the poorer breakfast in consequence, and the other nine thought that it served them quite right for being so late. A doubt has always lurked in the recesses of my mind as to whether the joke was really on the two or on the nine.

We did not, as in former days, keep steadily to a regular pace without stopping, even for hours at a time, and walking in comparative quiet. For the hammock carriers go very rapidly, on a dog-trot, continually shouting, and a white man follows immediately behind each hammock. They repeat a regular call and response, half song, half shout, as if to sustain their animation and courage. What wonderful voices they have! The forest, startled from her deep repose as we pass along, responds with shout and answering echo, while we dash on

over height and depth, over rock and stream and mire, for an hour. Then, out of breath and in copious perspiration, we sit down for fifteen or twenty minutes, and at the word of command we are off again with a dash and a shout. It is all very pleasant and a great improvement on the old way, although one pays very little attention to the forest and is wholly oblivious to its moods. But the old way is still the regular way on all roads except those few which the white man has undertaken to improve.

And this disposition to "improve" everything he puts his hand to is a radical difference between the native and the white man. The mental habit of the native is contentment with things as they are; in which he is far more happy than fortunate. He would let this old world, or this old "bush" as he calls it, stay as it is to the end of time. The unhappy restlessness of the white man, his dissatisfaction with what he has and his longing for what he has not, his eagerness for change and "improvement," the native is sometimes disposed to regard as a morbid mental disease. But the greatest wonder of it is that the white man includes the native himself in his program of improvement. He finds him a denizen of the forest, his mental habitudes like her changing moods, now sullen and cruel, now gentle and cheerful for a little while, partaking of her darkness mingled here and there with broken beams of light; and as he clears a way through the deep forest making the darkness light, so he labours that a gleam of heaven's light may shine down into the benighted native soul; that it may lighten the path of his destiny more and more, and lead him on, in ways of purity and peace, till the gleam become the "perfect day."

V

THE CAMP-FIRE

IF it is dreadful to be overtaken in the forest by the punctual night of the tropics, while unprepared, without camp or comfort, yet, to the weary man, after a good bath and a good supper, and with a good bed awaiting him, the brief period of the departing day and the increasing camp-fire glow, the smell of wood smoke and the crackle of the burning log, are a delightful experience.

The camp is usually an open glade, where the night is not so sudden in its fall. The shadows grow longer in the evening light, and the gray twilight deepens till the stars shine through. Then in the red glow of the camp-fire, phantom shadows and eerie forms flit to and fro, approaching towards us and receding into the darkness like spirits impelled by curiosity, and planning either play or mischief according to the mood of the observer. In the day the man is properly the master of his mood, but in this hour it is pleasant to relax and let the mood be master of the man, giving a free rein to fancy.

Immediately after supper it was my custom to hold prayers with the carriers. Then, if the labour of the day has been easy, or a Sunday rest has intervened, they become more sociable and communicative than usual, and often prolong the evening with camp-fire stories. They are born orators and can tell a story to perfection, whether it be a fable handed down from others, or a narrative from their own experience. The knowledge of the native may be ever so limited and his thought meagre, but he can

always give it appropriate and striking form and express himself in forceful and sometimes beautiful language. He never hesitates nor becomes incoherent; his words flow like a river and keep well within the course of his purpose. His gestures are animated and infinitely varied, sometimes grotesque, more often graceful, and always expressive.

He has also a faculty of imitation beyond all men. For instance, two schoolboys (if we may leave the camp-fire for a while to digress upon this native talent for imitation)—two schoolboys sit talking together, myself paying no attention, when one of them imitates the clicking of my typewriter so that I immediately recognize it. A new clock has recently been placed in the school, and I recognize their imitation of its stroke. Again, I recognize the noise of the gasoline engine of the launch, *Dorothy*, now at half speed, now full speed, now running smoothly and now with the peculiar omission followed by a heavier stroke, due to a weak battery.

A boy in talking to me refers to another boy by a name that I do not know, one with rather a peculiar countenance.

I say: "I do not know of whom you are speaking."

He replies: "He looks like this"—slightly twisting his face into an exaggerated and ludicrous likeness of the other boy, which I instantly recognize.

One day at Efulen the body of a very large monkey, killed by Mr. Kerr or Dr. Good, hung suspended from the roof of our back porch. The expression of the monkey's face was fearfully human. It did not look dead, but rather as if it had been very drunk the night before and was sleeping off the effects. I heard our two house-boys giggling and chuckling on the porch, and looking out I saw them standing in front of the monkey trying to look just like him, which they did with such startling success

that I complimented them by telling them that either of them might exchange places with the monkey without Dr. Good ever knowing the difference.

On one occasion a party of white men and native boys were travelling on a river launch for several days. Four of the white men occupied their spare time in playing a certain game with dominoes. One day when they had left the cabin, four native boys sat down in their places and taking the dominoes, began to imitate the white men. They were absolutely ignorant of the game, and did not know the white men's language, and yet they presented the semblance of the whole performance, each boy impersonating an individual white man—his exclamations, manner, and general behaviour during the progress of the game, from the deal to the last trick and the noisy conclusion.

This art of imitation is useful to the natives in hunting. For instance, a deer hunter in the forest will imitate the noise of two fighting bush-deer, and he will do it so well that any deer within hearing will come running to the spot. In reciting their numerous fables, in which animals are made to talk and act so as to teach lessons of prudence and goodness, the native will imitate the noise or the movements of each animal, and some of these stories one might almost follow without knowing the language.

This talent is also useful to the native in preaching the Gospel, which they all do, great and small, old and young, as soon as they become Christians, and often long before. I talked one day to a group of Christian boys, or young men, on the words: "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field," applying the words obviously to the subtlety of the Evil One in tempting us. Shortly afterwards, one of those young men, Ndong Koni (whose name I am likely to mention very

frequently in the succeeding chapters) preached to a large audience a sermon on those words, which put mine to shame :

"You know where you may expect to find other animals," he said, "and you also know their times." And then naming first the leopard, he told them the kind of place that it frequents, and at what hours it seeks its prey, while the eager audience roared assent. So he did with the elephant, the gorilla and others. But the serpent, he told them, is found everywhere, often in the path before them, even in their houses, and always when least expected. Then he compared its powers with those of other animals, describing the leopard's strength to fight, the fleetness of the deer in escaping, and how the monkey climbs; but how the serpent outfights the leopard, outruns the deer, outclimbs the monkey. The audience knowing well all the habits of the animals of the forest, was wildly appreciative, and several times took the sermon out of the speaker's mouth.

On another occasion, a young man, Amvama, preached on the "Lost Sheep" of the parable, describing its peculiar helplessness. All the animals of the forest, however far they wander, can find their way back—but not the sheep; every other animal has some peculiar defense against its enemies of the forest, but the sheep is defenseless. The sheep lost in the forest cannot of itself get back to the town, and it is sure to be devoured by the wild beasts. Amvama did not fail to apply this to our own moral plight as lost and helpless.

But, we will return to the camp-fire in the forest, and the dim and dusky company seated around it, and the larger circle of fitful shadows and furtive forms that come gliding out, and back again into the forest. The opaque darkness pours forth such a volume of sound as never was heard in any forest elsewhere;—a thousand mingled

noises of the night, weird, and difficult to associate with any bodily form, but belonging, one might easily fancy, to the shadow spirits of the forest, some of them perhaps the spirits of dead men—of those who, labouring under heavy loads, fell by the wayside, and died of sickness or fatigue, whose skeletons we sometimes pass ; of those who by the spell of an enemy's fetish lost their way, and never saw the face of man again ; of those who for some crime have been driven forth into the forest by their own people, to die of hunger, or by the beasts.

Above all the myriad noises of the night, and separate from them, at times there falls upon the ear a prolonged cry of distress, that smites upon the heart, heard always in the African forest and never afterwards forgotten. It is a succession of ten or twelve long cries, shrill, tremulous and piercing ; rather low at first, and vague, but gradually rising to a cry of definite terror, and again descending until it is lost in the volume of the forest noise.

It is a little disappointing to find the real source of this peculiar cry ; and most people never find it, for it is exceedingly difficult to locate ; whether near or far, whether high or low, one cannot be sure. It does not proceed as imagination suggested, from the spirits of the dead at variance and afflicting one another, but from a warm-bodied, innocent creature, the lemur, which lives in the heights of the trees, feeds upon insects, birds and reptiles, and seldom comes to the ground. In appearance it is somewhat like a bulky bear's cub, but not well armed for offense or defense, and leading a precarious life among the stronger and fiercer creatures of the forest.

And now it occurs to me that the *Lemures* in Roman mythology were the spirits of those who had died in sin and who could not find rest, for whom expiatory rites were celebrated in the temple. It is generally supposed that Linnaeus gave the name *lemur* to this family

of animals because of the pale and strangely ghost-like faces of some of them ; but the peculiar cry of this particular kind of lemur is more sepulchral than the appearance of any of them, and might well be a reason for the name they bear.

There is one other characteristic sound in the night-forest, though personally I have not heard this sound when far from the coast. It is a single monotonous note, a little like a low tone on a flute, about ten seconds in duration, and without rise or fall, a doleful sigh or sob of unending remorse. This sound, although it always seems to be distant, is even more difficult to locate than the other. It is human more than all other sounds of the forest, and yet sepulchral, and the superstitious mind is easily persuaded that it issues from the unseen world. The source of it is rather extraordinary ; for according to native testimony it proceeds from a certain gigantic snail, as it slowly draws itself into and out of its shell. This theory is difficult either for white man or black man to verify ; for the sound is heard only at night, and it ceases as one approaches. But the native is by no means likely to be mistaken.

And now at the camp-fire a native is relating to his fellows a strange legend of the origin of this sound ; a legend familiar to all the tribes of West Africa, and illustrating a rare interpretative faculty of the native mind. This is the camp-fire story :

“There was once a wayward and wilful son who lived alone with his mother. One day coming home hungry he ordered her to gather some greens and cook them for him. The mother, who never resisted his wishes, went out and gathered plenty of greens and cooked them. But in the cooking they shrivelled up as greens always do. Then the mother presented the greens to her son ; but the son looking at them accused his mother of having

eaten the greens herself. This she denied ; but the son would not believe her, and in his anger he struck her a blow on the head, and the mother fell dead at his feet. Then he cried out in anguish and sorrow ; long and bitterly did he cry, but in vain. She was dead ! She was dead ! He had killed his own mother. From that day, all the days he mourned, saying always : ‘I killed my mother ; I killed my mother ;’ and all the nights he sobbed and moaned : ‘I killed my mother.’

“Then the spirits seeing his sorrow, that it was very great, and hearing him cry always day and night, at last were moved with pity, and turned him into a snail, which cannot suffer like a man. But though the snail does not weep in the daytime, yet at night it mourns and cries : ‘I—killed—my—mother ;’ and so it will keep on crying until the end of the world.”

The reader will of course understand that the note of the snail is single and bears no resemblance to these articulate words of the son’s sorrow. The interpretation is purely spiritual, and poetic genius could scarcely improve upon it as an expression of the unending remorse which the sound conveys to sensitive and susceptible minds.

Sitting around the camp-fire they listen to the story as interested as if they had never heard it before, as children listen to the repetition of fables and nursery tales. Then remarks are made upon a son’s duty towards his mother, and some of them tell what good mothers they have ; for this is the deepest reverence and highest sentiment of the African mind.

“Whatever other estimate we may form of the African,” wrote Leighton Wilson, than whom no one has ever known the African better, “we may not doubt his love for his mother. Her name, whether she be dead or alive, is always on his lips and in his heart. She is the first being he thinks of when awakening from his slum-

bers and the last he remembers when closing his eyes in sleep ; to her he confides secrets which he would reveal to no other human being on the face of the earth. He cares for no one else in time of sickness ; she alone must prepare his food, administer his medicine, perform his ablutions and spread his mat for him. He flies to her in the hour of his distress, for he well knows if all the rest of the world turn against him she will be steadfast in her love, whether he be right or wrong.

"If there be any cause which justifies a man in using violence towards one of his fellow men it would be to resent an insult offered to his mother. More fights are occasioned among boys by hearing something said in disparagement of their mothers than all other causes put together. It is a common saying among them that if a man's mother and his wife are both on the point of being drowned, and he can save only one of them, he must save his mother, for the avowed reason that if the wife is lost he may marry another, but he will never find a second mother."

Following the legend of the snail, several fables are told as we sit by the camp-fire. There is a fable called, *The Chimpanzee and the Ungrateful Man* :

"There was once a poor man who had but one wife and one child, and they lived in a small house in a far-away bush town near which was a stream with fish. The man was a hunter, and with his spear he hunted game in the forest, but the woman made fish-traps of basketwork and caught fish in the stream.

"One day when the man was hunting in the forest the woman took her babe and went to look at her fish-traps. She put her babe on the bank and herself went down into the water. Soon the babe began to cry ; but the mother heard not for the noise of the running water. Now there was a mother chimpanzee in the top of a great tree near

by. The chimpanzee had her home there in a safe place ; but when she heard the babe she felt pity and she came down to the ground and taking the child in her arms, nursed it to sleep.

“The mother, having removed the fish from the traps, came up the bank to get her babe, and lo ! there sat a great monkey and the babe sleeping upon its breast. She screamed with fright, and screamed again, so that the chimpanzee, afraid lest the hunter might come, put the babe down and ran into the forest. The woman snatched her babe and ran home very much frightened. She told the story to her husband but he only laughed.

“However, the next time the woman went to work at her fish-traps the man followed her and hid in the thicket. Again the woman laid down her babe and waded into the stream and again the babe began to cry and again at length the kind chimpanzee ventured down the tree and quieted the babe on her breast. Then the man thinking only of procuring a big feast of meat drew stealthily near with spear in hand and aiming it right at the heart of the chimpanzee suddenly hurled it with all his might. But the chimpanzee, seeing him just in time, held out the babe to receive the flying spear which pierced through its body. The horrified father had slain his own child.

“The chimpanzee laid the dead babe on the ground with the spear still sticking in it, and fled to the forest. But before disappearing it turned and said : ‘I was doing you a kindness in taking care of your babe. Therefore the evil that you would have done me has fallen upon yourself.’ ”

There is a very common fable in which the turtle teaches the wisdom and prudence of not interfering in other people’s palavers. The leopard and the python had a quarrel. The leopard visits the turtle and asks his

help against the python. The turtle says to the leopard :
"Come again to-morrow evening."

Then the python comes to the turtle and asks his help against the leopard, and the turtle says to the python :
"Come again to-morrow evening."

The next evening the python comes again to the turtle and asks his help against the leopard. The turtle says to the python : "Go hide in the thicket and keep still for a while."

Then the leopard comes to the turtle and asks his help against the python. "Go hide in the thicket," says the turtle.

Then the leopard ran into the thicket and walked on top of the python.

"Now," says the turtle to the python and the leopard, "you can settle your own palaver."

Another man tells why it is that the leopard has no friend among all the animals, but walks always alone in the forest. Once upon a time a chief made a great trap to catch animals. First a gazelle fell into the trap. Then he cried and cried to his companion (the story-teller imitates the cry of this and the following animals to a vocal but delighted audience) but the gazelle's companion did not hear and he died there, for the chief was away on a journey. Then a wild boar came and was caught and he also cried to his companion. Then an antelope came and was caught. They all died in the trap. Then came a leopard and was caught, but before the leopard died a turtle came ; and the turtle felt pity for the leopard and released him. Then the leopard wanted to kill the turtle which had released him. So the turtle crawled inside of a hollow tree. The leopard followed the turtle into the tree, but he got fast in the tree and could not get out.

Now this was a tree that bears fruit upon which

monkeys feed. So after a while there came a blue-nosed monkey to eat the fruit of the tree. Then there came a white-nosed monkey ; then a red-headed monkey ; then a black monkey. When the leopard heard the noise of the monkeys he begged them to come and release him. Then the monkeys all came and got the leopard out of the tree. But no sooner did the leopard find himself safe than he fought with the monkeys, and he killed the white-nosed monkey and the red-headed monkey and ate them. Then the black-haired monkey, who had escaped up a tree, said to the leopard : " You leopards are rogues and treacherous. We helped you and saved your life, and as soon as you were helped you turned on us and began to kill us." So the leopard to this day has no friends, but walks alone in the forest, for he cannot be trusted. And there are men who cannot be trusted any more than the leopard ; therefore they live without friends.

" Oh," cried the audience, " men do not know the language of the leopard and the language of the monkey." " No," replies the story-teller, " men cannot speak the language of either of these animals ; but some men have fetishes by which they can understand the language of all animals when they hear them talk."

A man tells " a true story " about a slave who lives in his town, and who frequently turns himself into a leopard and eats the sheep of the town. He has also, in the form of a leopard, attacked men and women of the town, who had offended him. Everybody in the town knows this to be true.

This suggests to another the story of a magic fight. A certain stranger coming into a town walked rudely against a man, wishing to quarrel with him that he might get his goods. The man said nothing, but expecting that the stranger would return and try to provoke a fight he prepared himself by making medicine ; for he had great

knowledge of medicine and magie, though he never used his knowledge execept in self-defense. The stranger returned as he expected and again walked rudely against him. The man said to the stranger : "Do you want to fight with me?"

"Yes," replied the stranger, and he cursed the man's mother, at which the man struck him.

Now the stranger was a powerful witch, and immediately he turned into a leopard ; but to his great surprise his opponent also turned into a leopard. Then a terrible fight took place between the two leopards. They leaped and sprang upon each other and howled so frightfully that the women of the town fell down with fear ; but the men all gathered around the fighting leopards. Then suddenly the stranger turned himself into a python and springing upon the leopard threw a deadly coil around its neck ; but the other leopard also turned into a python, and the pythons fought together, coiling about each other, hissing, and biting. Then the stranger turned into a gorilla that he might seize the python and choke it in his terrible hands, but the other python also turned into a gorilla, and the gorillas fought and tried to squeeze each other to death. At last the stranger, getting exhausted, turned into an eagle that he might fly away, but the other also turned into an eagle, and pursuing him dealt him a fatal blow. The dying eagle changed again into a man and begged the other man for merey, which was refused. He would not make medicine for him, and so the stranger died.

On one of these camp-fire occasions a coast man who had been employed at Efulen tells how he recovered certain goods that a Bulu workman had stolen from him. He called together all the workmen, both Bulu and coast men, and after telling them that his goods had been stolen he proposed to discover the thief by ordeal. He told them of an ordeal that was well known in his town,

and that never failed. Then he produced a dish of medicine he had made, which he said he would squirt into the eye of each man. In the eye of an innocent person it would be harmless as water, but it would burn the eye of the guilty one. From the first he had suspected a certain Bulu man, but he wanted formal evidence and the best evidence would be the man's confession, which he determined to obtain. He stood the men in a row, with the suspected Bulu man near the last. Then he began squirting a copious dose of medicine into an eye of each man in turn. It did not hurt in the least, for the very good reason that it was nothing but water—which nobody knew but himself. Then when he came to the suspected man, he slipped a handful of red pepper into the water, and squirted it into the man's eye. A sudden scream, a full confession, and the goods restored were some of the more important effects of this wonderful ordeal. And many African ordeals are useful for discovering a criminal when you happen to know who he is.

One man tells "a true story" of an evil spirit who hates people and who spreads disease and death. He once appeared in the forest near a town, in the form of a little child, evidently lost and hungry, and crying bitterly. Some kind-hearted woman finding him took pity on him and carried him to the town in her arms. But she was soon smitten with smallpox, which spread from her to others and the whole town was destroyed.

However the evening may begin with fable and fiction, it usually ends with narratives of fact and experience. But their facts are as fabulous as their fables and there is no distinct line between. One may listen to a story that is a tissue of impossibilities, and may suppose that the native is repeating a myth or a legend to which the imagination of at least several generations has contributed fantastic details, only to find that the purport of the story

is a narrative of fact which the native solemnly believes. For they know little of nature's laws and nothing of their uniformity.

Therefore "miracles" are always happening. The miracles of the New Testament, as a display of supernatural power, do not at first impress the native mind; not because he cannot believe them, but because he believes them too easily, and believes that miracles more wonderful take place in his own town every day. But the moral quality—the benevolence and mercy—of the New Testament miracles impresses him deeply, and this to him is their wonder. For, among his people, men and women who possess supernatural power wield it to an evil purpose, or at best, in their own interest.

A man tells of a murderer in his town who was suspected of having killed a number of persons who had died a mysterious death, after having first lost their shadows. The suspected man was closely watched, and, sure enough, one day they caught him in the very act of driving a nail into another man's shadow. Everybody knows that a man's shadow is his spirit, or at least *one* of his spirits, and if it be mortally wounded, or in any way induced to leave him, he will die. No man will long survive the loss of his shadow. But while witches and other murderers commit their evil deeds under cover of night, the shadow-slayer chooses the day and often the noonday. Many a man has lost his shadow at noonday—not so difficult to understand if it be remembered that we are speaking of the tropics, where, at certain seasons, the sun at noonday is directly overhead.

The people were so enraged at this murderer who was caught driving the nail into a man's shadow—was caught only after the deed was done, making death certain—and who must have been the cause of all the recent unaccountable deaths in the town, that they carried him into the

forest and bound him to the ground in the track of the driver ants, which immediately covered his whole body and devoured him, leaving nothing but the bones. But in the night-time his screams were still heard, even after his death, and the people were sore afraid. His spirit haunted the town, until at length the people deserted it and built in another place. And even yet the belated traveller passing that way hears the screams of the dead man.

But the greatest fear in all Africa is the witch. The witch's soul is "loose from her body," and at night she leaves her body and goes about the town, an unseen enemy, doing mischief and wickedness. A young man by the camp-fire tells of a witch in his town who for some time had been "eating" the children of the town. It is not the body, but the spirit, that she eats, after which the child sickens, and gradually becoming worse, at length dies.

The discovery of witchcraft was made in a peculiar way. A certain man who was sick and lying awake at night with pain, thought one night that he heard a sound in the street. He crawled close to the wall and peering through a crack he beheld in the street the phantom form of a woman carrying the form of a child. She laid the child down in the street. Then she drew the form of a knife with the evident intention of cutting the child to pieces and eating it. But the knife was powerless to cut because of the bodily eyes of the man who was a spectator. Again and again the woman tried to dissect the child and still the knife refused to cut. At length it occurred to her that she was probably being watched. Then, taking the child up quickly, she returned it to the house whence she had stolen it, restored it to its body, and fled, without being recognized by the man who had seen her. In the morning he reported to the town all he had seen. The wildest excitement ensued. The mothers of the town were in terror, not knowing who the witch was that was

eating their children. But one of the women was taken suddenly ill and they became suspicious, though they said nothing. She grew rapidly worse until she was seized with a convulsion and foam appeared at her mouth, a certain sign of witchcraft and that her own witch inside had rebelled and was eating her. Then they all reviled and cursed her, gave her no food, threw cold water on her, mocked her agony, and exulted in her pain until she died.

A deep, resonant, hungry roar of a leopard arrests the attention of the company around the camp-fire. It is at a pretty safe distance, however, and the white man having given orders to keep the fire burning retires to his hammock a little apart, but takes his rifle with him.

The effect of these last stories is sobering and saddening, especially to a mind not yet accustomed to such tales. A shadow lies across the white man's heart. And that same shadow lies across every charm in Africa and mars every beauty—the reflection of the cruel ignorance and awful sufferings of its people. The observer who does not see the shadow must never have entered into the mind-life and the heart-life of the people. The vast forest darkness, and the weird night-sounds that befit the darkness, deepen the impression of the camp-fire stories.

That piercing cry of the lemur, how it suggests the terror of the wretched man devoured by driver ants! And that other mournful note is surely the remorse of spirits in the other world for cruel deeds committed here.

There is now something awful in the darkness. One feels with the *Ancient Mariner*—

“Like one that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows a fearful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.”

Sleep does not come quickly to a mind depressed. As I lie awake and listen, the noises of the night reverberating through the forest, with the rush of the wind in the tree tops, blend together in one vast chorus, whose music is a funeral march.

The materialistic modern mind calls the universe a machine. But the old Norsemen of the forest said that it is a tree, the tree *Igdrasil*, that lured the mind of a great modern mystic. Often in the night-forest have I recalled the Norse legend of the tree *Igdrasil*, the tree of *existence*. It is watered by three streams, the past, the present and the future. The branches are human history, the leaves are the actions and the words of men; the wind sighing through it is the sobbing of men's sorrows.

But the forest is as variable in her moods as the mind of a man. Stern at times and sometimes awful, yet again she loves to soothe the mind and impart a gentle cheer. If you would know the charm of the night-forest in her most intimate and communicative mood you must wait until some time, as if in response to an inaudible summons, you waken after several hours of deep, restful sleep that is one of the secrets of the forest. Under a roof and between close walls a wakeful hour is monotonous and miserable and the habit of wakefulness is a malady that were fit penance for mortal sins. But in the open forest, especially when there is a glimmer of stars shining through the screen of dark foliage, a wakeful hour passes easily. One is never lonely in such an hour, for a mystic life pervades the night-forest, and one realizes that it is something more and greater than the definite forms which the eye sees by day. When these are dissolved in darkness one is more sensible of the underlying, mysterious life, as of a spiritual presence. Forms, whether material or creedal, sometimes conceal the reality which they represent. The noises of the night-forest, the mingled voices

of innumerable crickets, tree-toads, frogs and croaking night-birds, the chatter of the stream over the stones, the rushing of the wind above the trees, with many unfamiliar sounds, each almost indistinguishable in the thrilling volume, seem but the sights of the silent day transformed into sound, and one feels that the interpretation of the sound would be also the interpretation of the forms and shapes, of colours, of shadows and broken light-beams.

This illusion may be promotive of the native belief in animistic nature. For the eye does not see those animate creatures in the day, and to the child-mind it might easily seem that the myriad noises of the night issue from rock and hill and stream and tree.

Lying thus awake but restful, the blended noises of the resounding forest fall upon the passive ear like the confused echo of some world-orchestra, or a broken strain from the music of the planets and the stars as they sweep through vast orbits, on and on forever. For the night-forest, unlike the day, speaks always musically to the ear that is attuned to hear it.

The soft sound of the wind among the leaves of the highest branches again lulls the wakeful listener into sleep; and he enjoys it the more because of the brief disturbance.

VI

A HOME IN THE BUSH

EFULEN, my first African home, I saw for the first time in July 1893. It is in Cameroon, among the Bulu people, directly behind Batanga, less than sixty miles from the coast, and about two hundred miles north of the equator.

Efulen is situated upon a hill two hundred and fifty feet high and nearly two thousand feet above the sea-level, and is surrounded by mountains. The scenery is beautiful and magnificent and resembles the mountainous parts of Pennsylvania ; but in that tropical climate there are atmospheric effects seldom seen in the colder latitudes. Mountain and valley are covered with a forest of green with here and there a tree of red or scarlet, and so dense that one might think he could walk on it. From the top of Efulen hill one looks out on a rolling plain of foliage that stretches away over valley and hill, until it becomes extinct in the dim distance of the empurpled hills. Often in the morning, when the atmosphere of the valleys is clear, an overhanging mist cuts off the tops of the mountains, which appear as elevated table-lands, all of the same height, and precisely level. A few minutes later the scene is magically transformed. The mist has descended and filled the valleys as if all the clouds of the heavens had fallen down, while the mountain-peaks, radiant with the sunlight, rise out of the mist like islands out of a deep sea.

I have said that Dr. Good had already made one jour-

ney into this interior. He chose Efnlen for the site of the new mission station, and set natives to work cutting down trees and clearing the top of the hill. The name *Efulen*, which we afterwards gave it, was first used by the natives themselves. It is from a Bulu word, *fula*, which means to mix; for they never had seen such a mingling of people, of different towns and even hostile tribes, as they saw daily on our hill, where all could come with safety.

It was but few trees that the several workmen had cut when we arrived. For the native, especially when working for the white man, requires a large amount of intellectual stimulus. We found a bare spot of sufficient size for our tent, and there we pitched it and began felling the trees around us, letting the sun down upon ground that it had perhaps not reached for centuries. The wet season was upon us; the rains were heavier and more frequent each day. Our tent did not turn the heaviest rains, which sometimes came in on us in the night and saturated our beds; but it did us no harm. Much more serious were the extreme and rapid alternations of temperature within the tent. After a thunder-storm it was often cold enough to make our teeth chatter, while between showers, if the sun shone upon the wet tent, it was impossible to endure the heat inside. At such times, however, all we had to do was to stay outside. We slept on camp-beds, three of which filled the tent, leaving in the middle just room enough for a table, and we sat on our beds while eating, side-dishes being placed on the beds. Our table, which Dr. Good and I made with a cross-cut saw, and which had no legs, was a solid cut out of a log three feet in diameter. The first time we sawed it through our saw sloped off in a line at least thirty degrees from the vertical and with an increasing curve, to Mr. Kerr's undisguised amusement. But having served our apprenticeship we got the next quite straight. And since the slope of the

hill was about thirty degrees, the log table, when properly placed, stood exactly upright, and Mr. Kerr's ridicule was changed to admiration of our skill and judgment.

Most of our dishes were of tin, which we called our silver service. Indeed, there was no want of tin, for most of our food was imported in tins—meats, milk and butter. Africa, as some one says, is a land flowing with milk and honey—condensed milk and tinned honey. There are many varieties of tinned meats, according to the labels, but they all taste alike when one has become tired of them and dislikes them equally; sometimes, when one is feverish, the smell of them is as much as an ordinary stomach can digest in that debilitating climate. During those first months our meats were chiefly Armour's sausage and some anomalous concoction of strong meats and stale onions called *Irish Stew*. We bought from the natives bananas, plantains and sweet potatoes, and after some time we were able to buy a chicken on rare occasions. As soon as possible we began raising our own chickens; but it was only after several months that we had them frequently. Our cook, a young man from the coast, who spoke Kru English, would come to me and ask: "Mastah, what thing you go chop? Must I kill a chicken, or must I kill a tin?" He much preferred to "kill a tin," for in that case the cooking was very simple and consisted in punching a hole in the top of the tin and then placing it on an outside fire—we had no stove. When we began to have chickens occasionally the cook informed us that he must have an assistant, because "one man he no be fit for do all them work." Thus we lived for two months and a half, until our house was built. We bore the rudeness of our circumstances by making them a constant source of mutual amusement. And often we conquered defeat itself by laughing at it.

The hill was crowded from dawn until dark with a pandemonium of naked and astonished natives, who had never seen white men before. They think aloud. Every impression utters itself in a yell. The habit of talking aloud to themselves is so common that some white men have accounted for it by supposing that they are talking to the spirits of their ancestors. I can only say that if this be so they evidently conceive of the other world as being very far away.

Each separate act or movement of us white strangers produced a shout of astonishment.

"He walks!" they shout, when he takes a step forward; or: "He sits down!" as they jostle each other for a front place to see the animal perform.

The animal, meanwhile, rises to his feet, sits down, then rises again, turns round slowly, lifts one leg, then the other, lifts his arms and turns round again. If he has a hat on he will take it off several times. If by any chance he should have a coat on he will take the coat off too. No matter how much he may take off they will still desire him to take off more and complete the vaudeville. He turns round once or twice more, moves each of his several limbs again, turns round again as an encore, and then sits down, while the crowd yells appreciation and delight. Then follows a lively discussion as to his appearance and proportions. Some of them think he would be good-looking if he only had some colour, but such a complexion would make anybody ugly. Others think that he is good-looking even as he is. An interesting query, however, is whether his whole body is white, or only his hands and face, the rest of him being black like themselves. In order to settle this urgent question they beg him to take off his trousers.

The white man's feelings are not seriously affected by the fact that they evidently consider his hat quite as won-



A GROUP OF ADMIRING NATIVES.

They admire the white man's hat as much as himself, and regard a suit of blue denim as a nobbler work than an honest man.

derful as himself, and a suit of blue denim a nobler work than an honest man. Of course the first novelty will soon wear off, but a white man, as long as he lives away from the coast and the older settlements, will always be an object of wonder and excitement, and will be expected to maintain his position by wonderful and exciting performances. There is danger that the missionary will never get used to it, but will lose his whole stock of patience and perhaps his reason in the effort ; and there is danger also that he will become so well used to this inordinate attention that he will miss it dreadfully when he comes home, and is relegated to his proper obscurity in American society.

Africa is not a great solitude in which one of an ascetic temper might enjoy silence and meditation. There is no quiet except during the night and no solitude but the solitude of a strange city where one passes through a multitude unrecognized and unknown. For these Africans will probably never know us. Nor had we three white men any privacy in our relations with each other, either in our tent or in the house that displaced it ; and for my own part, this was the most trying of all our privations. Under the circumstances I think we three men deserved great credit for not hating each other. But after supper, when it was dark I used to go out to a little walk about ten yards long in front of the house and removed a short distance from it, the only smooth walk on the entire hill, and there I enjoyed a few minutes of delightful respite from noise and publicity, while my thoughts of home and friends were unrestrained. The life in the homeland seemed already painfully distant, and almost vague and unreal. Like Silas Marner, when he removed from his old home to Raveloe where he was surrounded by people who knew nothing of his history, so to me sometimes the past seemed like a dream because related

to nothing in my present life, and the present, too, a dream, because linked with no memories of the past.

Even at night the noise does not cease, but only removes to a distance where it no longer disturbs. The people stay in their towns at night, but they usually make more noise than in the day. From a village at the foot of the hill rises the weird and incessant wail of their mourning for the dead, an appalling dirge that chills the blood; from another village near by, a savage noise of war drums and shouting by which they are warning an expected enemy that they are on the watch; from another, the uncouth music of their dissolute dance; from another the cries of men who profess to be transformed into gorillas or leopards:—on all sides the noise ascending throughout the night like the smoke of their torment.

How eagerly we welcomed the mail! It arrived once a month, and was six weeks old. Even Dr. Good, indefatigable worker, and the opposite of emotional, was unable to pursue the usual routine of work when we were expecting the carriers with mail. They usually came in the evening, and all that day we were under a noticeable strain of expectancy. We were also exceedingly talkative and communicative for a day or two after its arrival. Years afterwards I once visited one of our missionaries, Miss Christensen, when for some months she had been staying alone at Benito, one of our old coast stations. I remarked that the arrival of her mail must be a great relief to the extreme loneliness of her situation. She replied that, on the contrary, the mail day was the loneliest of all, for want of some appreciative friend to whom she could tell the news contained in her letters and talk about it. There were educated natives around her whose friendship was almost sufficient for other days, but not for mail day. Her home interests were unintelligible to them.

My first letters from Efulen were written on an im-

mense log that lay near the tent. I stood and leaned over upon it as I wrote. When I finished my first letter I found that I had been leaning against a stream of pitch all the while, with the sleeve of a woollen sweater lying in it. But the difficulties of letter-writing were not merely physical. Each correspondent in the homeland naturally expected me to tell him all about the natives and our life in Africa. To describe adequately any one phase of our life would require a length of letter that would have made my correspondence unmanageable, and to refer to our strange surroundings without adequate description would have left my letters unintelligible. I thought to meet the difficulty by dividing my friends into groups, asking friends of a feather to flock together, and writing occasionally a long and elaborate letter to each flock. I have never succeeded in killing two birds with one stone, but I killed a number of valued correspondents with each of those letters. No one replied to them but the person to whom the envelope was directed.

After one month in Africa, while we were still in the tent, I had my first and worst experience of the dreaded African fever, although in this instance it was probably malarial-typhoid. It lasted several weeks. When we had been at Efulen nearly a month Dr. Good was suddenly called to the coast by the severe illness of his wife, who was at Batanga expecting soon to leave for home. Dr. Good was not a physician, but with years of experience and an aptitude for medicine he had acquired such skill in the treatment of African fever that he was almost equal to a physician. As for myself, I summed up my experience in the statement that once in my life I had had a severe headache. I do not remember whether Mr. Kerr's experience had been as extensive as mine. We both had a vague consciousness when Dr. Good left for the coast that our situation was precarious and fraught

with some danger :—in a country called the *Whiteman's Grave*, under conditions that even in America would have taxed the constitution of the strongest. In the light of later knowledge we could have greatly improved upon our pioneer methods, and they seemed to us quite amateurish though supported by the best intentions. In coping with untried conditions and unknown factors of danger one must always expect to go through a period of preliminary inexperience and make preliminary blunders before attaining the mastery. But in Africa the preliminary inexperience often costs the life of one and the blunders disable another, while the triumph is reserved for those who come after. The imperfection of our first policy was inevitable; the present method, which provides every procurable comfort for men so situated, is not only more humane but immensely more economical. It is only in the last few years that missions have become a science—at least in Africa, and that those who go to dangerous and unknown places may profit by the formulated experience of those who have gone to such places before. Of course it was never intended that two new arrivals, Mr. Kerr and myself, should be left alone at a new station. But the unexpected emergency which called Dr. Good to the coast is typical of the miscarriage of the surest plans that men can make in Africa.

Only a few days after Dr. Good left Efulen I was stricken with the fever. The approach of it is very peculiar, especially the first time. I mistook it for a spell of homesickness; for one becomes extremely depressed. I thought I had been brave, but all at once the very pith of my resolution was gone. I felt that I had overrated my courage. The life which I had chosen seemed a doom from which there was now no honourable escape. My feelings recoiled in an agony of revolt that was mentally prostrating. It was the fever and I did not know. It

was night and I was walking near the house, but I was too tired to continue walking, and I lay down on the ground in the dim starshine and wept for home,—it was many years ago and I was very young. I was not surprised that I had a severe headache, for I thought it was the result of my mental agitation. The next day I was worse, and the following night I was delirious the whole night, but morning brought relief. I did not think it could be fever for the symptoms were not what I had expected. We were pitifully helpless.

At last, a happy thought striking Mr. Kerr, he exclaimed: "I have a thermometer: that will tell us."

"It would tell us," said I, "if we knew what normal temperature is; but for my part I don't know, though I think it is 212° "—perhaps I was still delirious.

Mr. Kerr suggested that it might be marked on the thermometer. And, if not, I said that he might take his own temperature first, and so ascertain the normal.

However, it was marked on the thermometer at ninety-eight and two-fifths degrees, or thereabouts. Mr. Kerr then took my temperature and found that it was 105° . In the evening it was 106° . Next day it was the same, and so the fever raged for several days. We dispatched a messenger to Dr. Good, reporting to him also my temperature for two days. It was the tenth day of the fever before he reached me, though he started immediately; for the roads were at the worst. He had no expectation that I would be alive. Meantime I had begun to take quinine. The wet season was now at the worst. The tent was not sufficient to turn the heaviest rains, which sometimes came through and saturated the bed. Between showers the sun came out so strong that I was compelled to leave bed and rush outside for fresh air. After several days of this, Mr. Kerr suggested that my bed be moved into the house of the workmen, which had only an earthen

floor with a considerable slant to it. But it had at least a thatch roof that would turn rain and would afford a better protection against the sun. There was a square opening for a window over which we hung a salt-bag. Then followed a long fight for life, through several weeks, and a slow victory due chiefly to the kindness and untiring care of my associates. Dr. Good after his arrival nursed me day and night. What is usually known as African fever ends fatally or otherwise in a few days. I therefore concluded long afterwards that it must have been malarial-typhoid.

We each have our foibles and whims which sickness sometimes brings into strong relief. One of my own I cannot forbear relating. After several days of sickness, when I knew that it was fever, and recovery seemed hopeless, my mind turned to the meagre and unique undertaking formalities in such a place as Efulen. The fact that no boards were procurable did not trouble me in the least; I felt that I could be comfortable in a cotton blanket or a rubber sheet. But I had a great longing for a genuine white shirt laundered in America. Through all the successive changes of clothing by which I had gradually discarded the total apparel of civilization I had maintained a serene attitude. But, for that final ceremony, after which there should be no more changes, I had a childish desire for something that would separate me from the rude and savage surroundings of Africa and that would serve to designate the civilization to which I really belonged; and the most civilized article I could think of was a white shirt such as those I had packed away in the bottom of a trunk at Batanga.

A little incident of that period will further illustrate the helplessness of bachelor white men in such an emergency. One day, when I had been ill a week, I became hungry for the first time; but not so hungry that I could

eat corned beef, sardines, or Irish stew ; and we had not yet been able to procure a chicken or even an egg from the natives. Mr. Kerr looking hopelessly over the pile of tins suddenly discovered one little tin of oysters, which had gotten into our supplies by some happy mischance. He shouted for joy and came running to show it to me. Nothing could have been better ; and when he asked me how I would like to have them prepared, I said I would like them stewed in milk. He soon brought them to me steaming, and even the odour seemed to invigorate me. I took a spoonful—and with a nauseous exclamation I spewed it into the middle of the room. Dear reader, *condensed milk is forty per cent. sugar.*

Two other incidents of those days will serve to exhibit certain native characteristics that I may not have occasion to notice again. A party of natives were going to the coast and on the way they stopped at Efulen. Hearing how very ill I was, and consulting with the workmen, they concluded that I might live one more day, or two days at the most. Accordingly when they reached the coast, the two days having expired, they reported to my friends that I was dead. The report was credited for several days, although in the mind of some there was a doubt. It was only when these messengers appeared again and they asked them about the details of the funeral that the story broke down notwithstanding the fine imagination of the natives ; for they had never seen a white man buried, and their own customs were very different. They evidently made me so misconduct myself at my own funeral that my friends concluded that I was alive. But that was the nearest I ever came to an untimely end. I would not by any means call those natives unmitigated liars. Not every white man can maintain the distinction between fact and conviction.

Again, one night when the fever was at the worst, a

small boy, Lolo, who was sitting by my bed keeping cold water on my head, told me that there was no more water. This was the fault of the cook, a man of Batanga. Mr. Kerr was asleep in the other end of the house, and he needed sleep. I sent for the cook and told him to go quickly and bring water. There was a good spring part way down the hill a short distance behind the house. The man refused to go, though he had never been disobedient before. He was afraid of the darkness. It was useless to threaten him or quarrel with him, and worse than useless for a sick man. No power under heaven could have compelled him to go to that spring alone; nor was there any one on the premises who would go with him. Not all are so cowardly in the night; but there are many strong men in Africa who would fight bravely to death with any visible or natural foe, but are arrant cowards before the creatures of their own imagination; invisible and supernatural enemies with which they fill the darkness of the night.

It was a great day for us when our new house was finished. It was made entirely of native material and was much like a native house except that it had a floor and was elevated from the ground and had swinging doors and windows. Like all houses of white men in Africa it was set on posts about six feet from the ground. The walls were of bark, in pieces six feet long and from a foot to two feet in width. The bark is held by split bamboo the size of laths, placed horizontally, six inches apart and tied with bush-rope made of the abundant vine, which is split and shaved down with a knife. The roof, which was supported by rafters of bamboo, was of palm thatch. This roof turns the rain perfectly and is much cooler than any other kind. There was no ceiling in the house.

The changes of temperature at Efulen being very sudden, and immediately felt within the thin walls of our



AN IMPROVED MISSION HOUSE AT EFTLEN.
The first house was similar but much smaller.

house, we had need of fire, and we made a fireplace by a simple device for which we claimed joint credit. We cut a hole in the floor and built the ground up from below to the level of the floor. There was no chimney, not even a hole for the smoke to escape; but it got out easily enough through the opening (the width of the rafters) between the walls and the roof. Usually we found it very pleasant to sit around a good fire in such a fireplace, and the smoke troubled us but very little. Often however by reason of some sudden change of wind, or passing whirlwind, the smoke was seized with panic and spread in a black cloud through the room, so enveloping us and suffocating our senses that the fire itself was wholly inferential, on the principle that where there was so much smoke there must be some fire. Many a thought of siderial sublimity, in the moment of its utterance, was thus strangled in a mouthful of smoke and ashes.

The whole house was twenty-four feet long and sixteen feet wide. There were five rooms in all. The partitions were of bark and did not reach to the roof but were eight feet high. We had greatly improved our furniture. Those who admire *mission* furniture ought to have seen ours. Instead of the first table, which was a solid piece of log turned on end, Dr. Good and I sawed a cut six inches wide out of that same log, and Mr. Kerr put rustic legs into it. The chairs were made exactly the same way but cut from smaller logs.

In such a house, seated upon such chairs and around such a table we sat each evening after supper, indulging in a social hour. And while the votaries of the *simple life* in the far-away homeland were absorbed in the discussion of such questions as How to Avoid Luxuries, the subject of our discussion was frequently How to Obtain Comforts.

We were not always idle as we talked; for the evening

brought its own duties, often of a strictly domestic nature. Sometimes, as we sat around the table, Dr. Good was engaged in darning his socks, Mr. Kerr was mending his shoes, while in a state of despair I was trying to put a neat patch on a pair of trousers.

This magnificent house was regarded by the Bulu, not as a private house, but as a public place, equivalent to their palaver-houses. They sometimes showed resentment when we insisted upon the personal view of it and required them to ask admission before coming in, which they were disposed to do in crowds and at all times, even when we were eating. We were always willing to show them through it in groups, though it took considerable time. Some of them expressed their astonishment in vociferous yells, but others, deeply impressed, looked around them with a reverential air, like people in church. They came up the steps of the porch on their hands and knees, as Africans always do at first. The women and children seemed afraid of the height of it and it would not have been possible to get them to stand near the edge and look down from the dizzy height of nearly six feet. This timidity which at first I could not understand and which later disappeared, I imagine was not due so much to the height of the house above the ground but to their doubt regarding the safety of the floor. They had never walked on any floor but the solid ground, and they stepped upon ours as if they fully expected that it would break and let them through.

We had hoped that the climate of Efulen would be more healthful than that of the coast; but the health record since the station was established in 1893, has not been better than that of some other stations. Personally I believe that without doubt Efulen is more healthful than the immediate coast at Batanga; but I do not regard it as more healthful than Gaboon. It is certainly cooler

and owing to its elevation of two thousand feet the air is not so humid and is more exhilarating. But the changes of temperature are very sudden and one becomes sensitive even to slight changes after being in the tropics a few years. In the light of similar experiments made elsewhere in West Africa it seems likely that less fever but more dysentery will prevail in those localities that have the higher altitudes, and less dysentery and more fever at the coast. To some persons fever is more dangerous ; to others, dysentery ; one may take his choice. At Efulen the sand-flies are very bad, morning and evening ; but they cease their activity in the bright sunshine and also in the darkness of night.

There was a marked improvement in our food after some months, owing to our obtaining a better cook from the coast. The coast men were at first in doubt about their safety among the Bulu, and none of those would go with us who could get a position at the coast. But when a number of their men had come back alive their fear was removed and we obtained better help. Our first cook was a common workman who had never cooked before. It was part of my duty to instruct him. To the objection that I had never cooked anything in my life there was the compensating consideration that the best way in the world to learn anything is to be obliged to teach it to somebody else. The moment that I dreaded most in the course of the day was that in which the cook appeared coming towards me to get the order for dinner. For, with Irish stew, salmon and sausage, what opportunity is there for the exercise of a fine gastronomic imagination? It was the same thing from day to day ; and if I derived no other good from the experience, I at least learned for all time to sympathize with housekeepers in the monotonous circularity of the domestic routine. Under my painstaking instructions the cook learned to wash

his hands instead of simply wiping them on his hair or his legs, to place a tin of meat on the fire (after punching a hole in the top), and to take it off when I told him to do so; he learned to put plantains into the fire to roast and to take them out any time he happened to think about it. But he had not yet learned the difference between warm water and hot water when he tired of his work and returned to his beloved home, while I began on another candidate for kitchen honours. About the time I had taught him to boil water he also wearied of work and went home. Then I hired a Bulu boy and began to instruct him even with more assurance, for I was now an experienced teacher. The Bulu boy learned fast, though he evinced an incorrigible disposition to carry his dish towel on his head, or tied round his neck. Finally after an experience of trials and tribulations in many chapters I appealed to Mrs. Godduhm of Batanga who trained a cook specially for us; and he proved a saint of the frying-pan. It was this cook Eyambe, who afterwards, as I have told in writing on bush travel, when we were overtaken by night in the forest, insisted that I should take his shirt, and said: "You must take him and wear him please. This bush he no be too bad for we black man; but my heart cry for white man."

It was several months before we had flour. Meantime, during my long fever, I conceived a desire for bread that became a craving like the hunger of famine as I grew weaker. Dr. Good sent word to Mrs. Good at the coast to send some bread as the carriers were returning immediately. He did not tell me that he had sent for it, lest by some mischance it might not come. But when it arrived and before he opened the package he told me it had come. Then they opened it; there were two loaves—all blue with mould and looking like poison; for it was the wet season and the carriers had been long on the way.

The disappointment was too great. I told Dr. Good to cut off the worst part, on the outside, and burn the rest to a black crisp, and I ate the burned bread.

Flour arrived some weeks later when I was again on my feet ; and then it occurred to us that none of us knew just what to do with it. For our cook had not yet arrived. One of us modestly confessed that he knew something about making biscuits. It was immediately voted that he take half a day off and exercise his culinary talent. The biscuits were made and appeared that evening on the table. When I surveyed them I suggested that it would be fitting that we should keep them as happy memorials of this first triumph. So saying I took the two that were coming to me and put them in my box of curios under the bed. I have them after all these years. Time works no change upon them.

Some months later I had a severe attack of dysentery and for three days had been allowed no food but the white of an egg. The physician, who happened to be visiting at Efulen at the time, told me one morning, in reponse to my eager inquiry, that he would allow me something a little heavier than the white of an egg. I immediately applied for a mince pie ; for we had minced meat in tins. The proposition was promptly vetoed by the doctor. But a week later, when I was again on my feet, the request was granted. This mince pie was the most pretentious achievement that we had yet undertaken, and the most stupendous failure. If too many cooks spoil a pie, as it is said of some other things, I think that the whole community of Efulen, white and black, must have had a hand in that ill-fated pie, for a few persons could never have made so many mistakes. The oven was a pot set on an outside fire, with another pot turned upside down to cover it. An explosion occurred during the process of cooking. I do not know what caused it—possibly a

stone bursting or the overheated pot cracking. At any rate it was a good opportunity for Dr. Good's wit, who contended that the pie had exploded through the neglect to put air-holes in the top of it. And that night he presented a resolution that hereafter cooks should be obliged to punch air-holes in the top of every pie, lest they should explode, thereby endangering our property and our lives and entailing the loss of the pie itself. I suggested an amendment, that in no case should a cook be allowed to make such pies upon tin plates, lest the plates, not being observed, might be cut up and eaten with the pie. Efulen has now passed the experimental stage. One can get as good cooks and better food there than at the coast.

In the work of the station, though formally we were equal, yet as a matter of fact, we recognized Dr. Good as head, owing to his years of experience and his competence. Dr. Good spent most of his time itinerating,—preaching in the streets of the villages near and far. He also made several long tours of two or three weeks for the purpose of exploring the further interior. While at the station he studied the language, translated, and did a large amount of medical work. Mr. Kerr had charge of the work of building, and most of the material work necessary in establishing the station. I studied the language, did all the buying from natives and went to the coast when it was necessary that a white man should conduct the caravan. Later in the year I did what I could of Dr. Good's medical work in his absence, the chief result being invaluable experience on my part, and no fatalities that could be proved to be the direct result of my treatment.

I am sure that those who have never been among uncivilized people, or at least those who have not a vivid realization of their ignorance will not know what a layman with experience may accomplish in healing the sick

and instructing the mind through healing. When I went to Africa I was as ignorant of medicine as an educated man could be, and I had neither Dr. Good's liking nor aptitude for it. But, in the first place, like other white men in that climate, I was soon compelled to become my own physician. For even if there is a professional physician at the same station, he cannot be there always; but self-care must be constant, and so one accumulates a considerable experience. And what he does for himself he can do for the natives. For however ignorant he may be of medicine he is wiser than they. When I saw a woman writhing in a convulsion I at least suspected poisoning; but they suspected witchcraft and beat drums around her to drive out the bad spirit. When I saw a poor boy delirious with fever and instead of administering some remedy the distracted parents were only trying to discover who had bewitched him, the difference between my knowledge and their ignorance seemed immeasurable, and I could advise them and help them, for already I had learned considerable about malarial fever. When a poor child was suffering with worms, that frightful scourge of Africa, incredible to us in the extent of its prevalence, and the parents, though they knew and could tell me what was the matter, yet knew of no remedy but to change the child's fetishes, I knew, even if I had been in Africa only a few months, that santonine is far more effective than any change of fetishes. And no man ever lands in Africa before he knows that sulphur is excellent for itch. Ulcers also are exceedingly common. Cuts, scratches and wounds are always neglected and may become bad ulcers; and sometimes the blood is so tainted by the diseases of vice that ulcers will not heal without internal remedies such as potassium iodide. There is abundant need of all the skill of the best equipped physician. But the majority of cases needing medical treatment are simple in the

diagnosis and the treatment ; for the weak and the sickly are bound to die young. Fevers, ulcers, worms, and itch are very common and cause more suffering than everything else. But any layman can do something for these. And if he is associated with a physician for a time, he can learn to do much for the relief of suffering. He can do as much as he has time to do ; and knowledge grows with experience. So it was that even I, despite unusual ignorance of medicine and original ineptitude, after some years, when I was in charge of a boys' boarding-school, treated from fifteen to twenty boys a day ; for the parents were especially willing to send their sick boys ; and at the end of the term there was very little sickness among them.

There is much less sickness among the tribes of the interior than those at the coast. If we knew all the reasons for this we might also know why the coast tribes everywhere are dying out, many of them being now but small remnants of formerly great and powerful tribes. The coast tribes have all come from the interior, and the interior tribes to-day are all moving towards the coast. The change of climate may have been for the worse ; for the strong sea-breeze alternating with the stronger land-breeze is hard on those who are not protected by clothing. The slave traffic greatly reduced the coast tribes and threatened the extinction of some of them ; but it is not a reason why they should still continue to decrease. The excessive use of the white man's rum without doubt reduces the birth-rate among coast tribes. Besides, certain diseases have been imported with the white man's vices. And it is also possible that the greater amount of sickness and disease among coast tribes may be in part due to the better care of children among the semi-civilized people of the coast, with the result that a greater number of weak and sickly children live to maturity than

in the savage life of the interior, where none but the robust are likely to survive.

Many sick people came to Efulen, most of them with very bad ulcers. They realized the benefit, and it won their good-will and their desire to have us stay among them; but I cannot say that it won their gratitude. Even when they paid nothing for medicines or for bandages, they took for granted that we were in some way serving our interest by healing them. Their psychology allowed no place for any altruistic motive. The outer bandage with which Dr. Good bound their nleerated limbs, he used several times, in fact as long as he could, for bandages were not easy to supply and many were required. But his patients, especially the women, liked to have new white bandages each day, for they regarded them as ornamental. So they would take off the bandage before coming to him and would declare that they had lost it, or that it had been stolen. But frequently when he would tell a woman that he would not dress the ulcer until she should find the bandage she would deliberately take it out of her basket before his eyes and hand it to him half laughing and half scolding. Shortly after our arrival at Efulen a chief came from a distant town bringing his sick wife. He left her, however, in the village at the foot of the hill and first came up alone to talk the palaver with Dr. Good and see what the white man would give him if he would bring his sick wife to him to be healed. Very frequently they asked for pay for being treated and for taking our medicine. The medical work therefore did not serve our missionary purpose as greatly as I had anticipated. But that is no argument against it. Duty is duty; and to relieve pain and suffering as far as we are able is a duty quite apart from any consideration of gratitude or reward.

No more notable event occurred during the entire year

than the visit of Mrs. Laffin, one of our missionaries at Batanga, who had only been in Africa a short time, and was destined soon to find a grave there. Dr. and Mrs. Laffin came in the dry season, when the roads were at the best, and Mrs. Laffin was carried in a hammock much of the time. Mrs. Laffin was a saintly woman, an ideal missionary and a very charming lady. She was the first white woman who ever visited the Bulu country, and it required a superb courage. She greatly desired to see the Bulu people; and besides, with the true woman's sympathy, she wished to know how we were really living at Efulen and to offer suggestions for our comfort. Our new house, for the first time, seemed very bare and quite unfit for such a visitor. As soon as we heard of her coming I sent to the coast for a number of things that I felt we must have for her reception. Among other things I asked Mr. Gault to send me some table-cloths, out of one of my boxes; though we had never felt any need of them before. He sent me bed-sheets instead; but they served the purpose admirably; and we had towels for napkins.

One day, when I was apologizing to Mrs. Laffin for our having only the comforts and none of the luxuries of life, she replied about as follows: "If I had loved a fine house and housekeeping more than anything else I would have stayed in America where both are possible. But I have chosen missionary work in preference, and housekeeping therefore is only a hindrance. Now, if you had carpets, upholstered furniture, and pictures on the walls, I, having a woman's domestic conscience, would feel that, instead of giving my time to the people, I ought first of all to oversee your house and order the housekeeping. But, as it is, this house gives me no more concern than if it were a wood-shed or a stable, and I can go to the towns without restraint or any conscientious scruple. I believe that in Africa we ought to have

as good food as possible, comfortable beds and chairs, and plenty of room, and I hope that you will soon have all these ; but for the brief period of my visit here your house just suits me." I may say that I made no more apology.

One day while Mrs. Laffin was there she was buying some food from a native for which she paid him in salt. She gave him the right amount, but he as usual thought it was not sufficient and told her to go and bring some more. When she did not do as he said, he ordered her in the threatening tone that he would use to a Bulu woman. I immediately came forward and taking up his cassava threw it down the hill and told him to follow it "quickly, quickly." He looked at me in surprise and hastened to explain that it was not I whom he was addressing, but only the woman, and that he would never address a *man* in that manner. I told him that I would far rather he would address me in that way than the white woman. But he still repeated : "It was not you, white man ; it was not you, but only a woman that I spoke to."

At length, however, he understood my meaning, but was only more surprised than ever and calling out to his friends told them, to their great amusement, that in the white man's country the men obey the women,—which was not exactly the idea that I had intended to convey. I then told him that if he would tell the white woman that he was sorry for his rudeness she would still buy his cassava.

It was strange how Mrs. Laffin without knowing a word of Bulu, and making but little use of an interpreter, yet, by the language of a sympathetic heart expressed in manner and in actions, reached the hearts of those poor Bulu women, and discovered some womanly quality in them. They all followed her through the village, and

they were almost gentle in her presence. I heard them telling afterwards how that in passing through a certain village she saw a child who had cut its finger and was crying. It was a cut that his mother would not even have noticed, but Mrs. Laffin instantly drawing a pretty handkerchief from her pocket tore it in two to bind the bleeding finger. In another matter they showed surprising modesty, which Mrs. Laffin evidently thought was natural to them; but, indeed, it was natural to them only in her presence. One cannot describe, nor even understand, the powerful influence of such a woman upon the degraded and fallen of her own sex; but even all good women have not Mrs. Laffin's influence. When she was leaving Efulen after two weeks, to return to Batanga, the Bulu women as she passed through their villages left their work and their palavers to follow her far along the way in silence, only asking that she might some time come back again.

It was not many months afterwards that she was stricken with the dreaded fever, that came suddenly and unawares, like some stealthy beast creeping out of the jungle in the darkness. The third day she died. She had been in Africa a little more than a year. Such is the price of Africa's redemption. But we may not say that her life was wasted. Such a life and such an influence cannot be in vain.



THE PASSION FOR CLOTHES.

They soon begin to wear clothes which they regard as more ornamentation; nor do they always distinguish the "gender" of the garments sold them by the white man.

VII

THE BUSH PEOPLE

THE natives of Efulen, the Bulu tribe, are a branch of the great Fang tribe. They are brown—not black, in colour, and are several shades lighter than most of the coast tribes. They need not be commiserated for their colour. It is quite to their liking; and they think they are far better-looking than white people.

The Bulu go almost entirely naked. The men wear a strip of cloth a few inches wide, suspended from a string around the hips, one end of the cloth being fastened in front and the other behind. They wore only bark-cloth when we first went among them, made from the bark of a tree, the pulp being hammered out of it and the coarse fiber remaining. The women wore less than the men, their entire dress consisting of a few leaves suspended from a similar string around the hips and a square-cut bobtail of coloured grass. Children wear nothing but the string around the waist, which is put on immediately after birth and has a fetish significance. An occasional rub with oil and then with red powder, made of camwood, completes the toilet of the adults. Before our first year had passed some of the men in the villages near by were wearing imported cloth, and in larger pieces. By this time both men and women are wearing it. Superficial changes follow rapidly in the wake of the white man. But further back in the interior the conditions are still unchanged.

If they have but little use for clothing, they are excessively fond of ornamentation, and the women are slaves of fashion. Most of their ornaments are imported trinkets from the white man's country, which have travelled far in advance of the white man himself. Both men and women have a peculiar and striking way of dressing the hair. Crossing it back and forth over strips of bamboo, they build it into three or four ridges, several inches high, running from the front to the back of the head. Each ridge is mounted with a close row of common white shirt-buttons. When shirt-buttons cannot be procured, a certain small shell is used. Sometimes the ridges are circular, one within another like a story cake, iced with shirt-buttons. In addition to this the women often sew on above each ear a card containing as many as six dozen buttons. Sometimes they also build a kind of splash-board behind the head, from ear to ear, to hold more buttons. The hair thus arranged remains undisturbed for several months. It forms a convenient place for wiping their hands or the bread-knife (which is also every other kind of knife) or anything else that may be particularly dirty. After dressing the hair grease is smeared over it, from time to time, which in the sun melts into the hair, giving it a rich gloss; and some of the grease passing through issues in a very black stream down the back. This enables it to support an amazing abundance of small animal life. They are very generous in helping one another to remove these, and in passing through a village one may often see some one reclining with his or her head in the lap of a friend who is performing this kindly office. It is especially appropriate that a host should thus accommodate a guest. It is done in the street, of course, where everything else is done. For if they should retire to the house any length of time something might happen and they not be there to see;

or, some bit of particularly spiey scandal might be detailed and they not hear it, and life even at the best is dull enough.

But we have not completed the decorating of these women; for they would be ashamed to be seen in this paucity of ornamentation. Across the middle of the forehead they wear several strings of beads, or sometimes a strip of monkey-skin, an inch wide, edged with shirt-buttons, and fastened behind the head. They also have bangles three inches to a foot long, all around the head, consisting of loose hair strung with beads of all colours. But there is still room for more, and they wear around the neck countless strings of a small blue-black bead, piled up sometimes several inches high on the shoulders. Occasionally they pierce the septum of the nose and insert a string of beads or a brass ring; and the ears are treated in the same manner. A black tattooed marking between the eyes, and two broad artistically designed lines of the same upon the cheeks running from the direction of the ear towards the mouth, complete the head-ornamentation of a fashionable Bulu woman.

Upon one arm, or both, she wears an enormous cuff, made of heavy brass wire, an eighth of an inch in diameter, coiled into a solid gauntlet, large at the elbow, tapering down to the wrist and spreading again towards the hand. It is made on the arm and is not supposed to be removed. Sometimes it is worn on the upper arm, in which case it chafes the arm, and after a while causes an ulcer. These are also frequently worn on the lower leg. But for this latter purpose they prefer a large brass ring, several of which they wear on each leg, and which they keep brightly polished. A woman if she can afford it, wears as many of these brass rings as she can walk with.

It is strange that they have no love of flowers, and still more strange when one considers their instinctive

love of music. Passing through a village and seeing a woman performing her semi-annual duty of combing her hair, I have suggested the decorative possibilities of flowers rather than shirt-buttons. I have even gathered them for her and have put them in her hair, and I am sure they were becoming. But to her they were ridiculous; nor was she moved when I told her that white women in my country infinitely preferred flowers to shirt-buttons.

The men are tattooed on their faces and their breasts; but the markings are light and scarcely disfigure the face. Every man carries at his left side a long, two-edged, sword-like knife. It is a splendid article, which they themselves manufacture. It is carried in a sheath of python-skin, suspended from a shoulder-strap of leopard-skin, though sometimes monkey-skin or goat-skin is substituted. The flint-lock gun had reached there long before our time; and every man had a gun which he carried all the time.

The men are usually tall, athletic and remarkably well-formed, though not as full in the chest as a perfect physique would require. Most of the younger men are good-looking. Many of the younger women have decidedly pretty faces, but they are not as intelligent-looking as the men. Most of the children are beautiful, with sweet, good-natured faces and lovely eyes. Indeed, all of those whom one would call good-looking have beautiful, large and expressive eyes, that can look brimful either of laughter or affection; and the boys, to the age of fourteen or fifteen, have the most beautiful eyes I have ever seen.

The Bulu people were unmistakably friendly and fluently sociable. It did not seem to matter much that during those first days we did not understand a word they said. The women were more sociable than the men,

but the men were more dignified and self-respecting. Most sociable of all was the head-wife of the principal chief. In the usual traveller's book he would be called a king and she a queen, but these titles are misleading without explanation. This "queen" often used to come to Efulen selling potatoes, half a bucketful at a time, for which she bought more beads. She was getting along in years, but still maintained an air of superannuated gaiety. Upon her back were several ugly scars where his lordship, her husband, had struck her with a cutlass—an unpleasant habit quite characteristic of African husbands. One day, wishing to strengthen the bond of friendship, she presented us with a coil of snake for our dinner, which we declined with profuse thanks. On another occasion, after our house was built, she came with five junior wives of the same chief, and asked that they be shown through our house. I escorted them through the house, as one might escort a party through the White-house in Washington. Shrieks of wonder accompanied their inspection of every article. Finally this head-wife, in lively gratitude, insisted upon dancing in the dining-room for our entertainment. The feet are the least active members in this singular dance. Most of the time she stands in one place; nor does she pirouette like the dervish of Egypt. The dance has not the gladsome hop of the Bohemian dances, nor the swift glide of the tarantella; and of course it is altogether unlike any of our conventional dances. It is an amazing and rapid succession of extravagant gestures, grotesque poses and outrageous contortions. The shoulders and stomach and all the muscles of her seeming boneless body are set in violent motion. If dancing is "the poetry of motion," this is downright doggerel. She accompanies it with a vocal imitation of their several wooden instruments, as incongruous as the dance itself. She seems to be imitat-

ing half a dozen instruments at once, while deaf to either applause or remonstrance on our part she dances on heedless of perspiration and decorum. Finally this lady came to me one day and, offering to leave her husband, made me a proposal of marriage, to the delight of Dr. Good and Mr. Kerr. Shortly after this she went crazy.

We came in contact with a belief regarding the white man's origin which is widely prevalent, namely, that their dead ancestors have gone over the sea and have become white men. We, therefore, are their ancestors. Dr. Good and I once entered a town where the white man had never been seen. While the people were still standing back, afraid of us, a woman looking intently in my face uttered a cry of recognition, mistaking me for her dead grandfather, or grand-uncle, or something of that sort.

"Are you not so-and-so, of my family?" she asked.

Not being eager to claim relationship, I hastily assured her that I was not.

"Are you a spirit, or are you flesh?" she asked.

I told her I was no spirit, but flesh and bones and as solid as herself; and I invited her to come and put her hand on me.

"Will my hand not go through?" she asked; and I assured her that it would not.

Then coming towards me gradually, taking a short step, then a fearful breath, then another step, she at last put her hand upon my arm and then not knowing what would happen to her she turned and ran down the street. But soon recovering herself she cried out: "He is solid just like us. My hand didn't go through." Then they all came, men, women and children, to investigate for themselves. Some pinched me, some pushed, and some pulled my hair, to the infinite amusement of Dr. Good. I made no protest against the more delicate experiments of the

women and children; but the sense of touch on the part of the men was so obtuse that I turned on one of them and by the vigorous use of my fists undertook to convince him that my quality was more substantial than spirit, while the town shrieked with laughter. The rest were willing to take that man's word that I was solid. "You're flesh and bones," they cried in a chorus.

"Yes," said I, "I am flesh and bones and fists."

When we first went among them our safety was in their fetishism and this we had counted upon. However kindly they may have felt, yet to them our poor bundles of goods were fabulous wealth; and it was our opinion then and afterwards that greed would have completely mastered them and they would have killed us for our goods if they had dared. Dr. Good, as I have said, had lived for years among the Fang, whose language is so much like the Bulu that he could understand the Bulu from the first, although he did not always let them know this. In the first Bulu town where we stayed over night Dr. Good heard them discussing us. The younger men were greatly excited and might have proved dangerous but for the counsel of the older men, who are always held in high respect. These elders argued that since we three strangers, with a few unarmed followers, had left our own tribe and had come boldly among them we must surely have very powerful fetishes—powerful enough to overcome theirs and inflict death on our enemies. Our very goods which they coveted was evidence of this; for it is only by fetishes that people acquire riches. Further evidence was afforded by the fact that we had meat in tins which our boys told them had been there for two years and it was not rotten. They had seen it, and it smelled delicious. But the convincing proof was Mr. Kerr's gun, the most beautiful thing that ever had been seen, and which, according to the report of the boys, was

never known to miss aim (which indeed was a fact when Mr. Kerr held it) and everybody knows that this depends entirely upon a man's fetishes. These sage counsels prevailed. And before this belief in our fetishes and the fear of them was dissipated we had gained their friendship, and were safe on that basis.

A month after our arrival at Efulen, Dr. Good, having occasion to go to the coast, on the way bought something from a native to whom he gave a note addressed to me in which he requested me to give the bearer a red cap—a thing of yarn worth about five cents, much appreciated by the native, but more becoming to a monkey than a man. Dr. Good explained to him, as his eyes dilated with astonishment, that he would only need to go to Efulen and hand the note to me without saying a word, whereupon I would fetch out a red cap and give it to him. It was almost too great a strain upon his credulity, but he agreed. His entire town accompanied him to see this unheard-of miracle. It was a walk of half a day and they passed through several towns on the way, in which they told what was going to happen at Efulen. The population of each town, jerking the dinner off the fire, snatching up the baby and leaving the dead to bury their dead, joined in the procession. A great crowd presented themselves before the house. They had agreed not to invalidate the evidence of the miracle by letting me know what Dr. Good had said. The note was the fetish that must effect the result. They stood with their hands over their mouths for fear the secret would fly out. Despite their extraordinary efforts to keep silence for a minute they were only moderately successful. The leader handed me the note: I looked at it and without a word went into the house and immediately returned with the cap. They vented their astonishment in a great shout. Then each of them, yelling as loud as possible, began to repeat the

entire incident from the beginning. They must have been telling the story to their dead ancestors in Europe and America, if one might judge by their evident distance, and by the fact that no one seemed to expect anybody else to listen to him. This incident increased our prestige.

In a certain trading-house a similar incident once occurred. A native presented a note to the trader who gave him a knife. Then all the young enterprising natives appropriated paper wherever they could find it, and cutting it into similar pieces presented it to the trader supposing that he would automatically produce a knife and give it to them ; but when they witnessed his dumb ignorance they concluded that there were serious limitations to the white man's magic.

I have said that they regarded our meagre stock of goods as fabulous wealth. They regarded us as we might regard a multi-millionaire. And, strange enough, we gradually fell into their way of thinking, and regarded their attitude as consonant with the facts. And why not ? For, to be rich is to have a little more than your neighbours, and to be poor is to have less. There is no sense of privation in being compelled to do without those things which nobody else has ; but however much we may have, we feel the pinch of poverty when there are additional comforts and enjoyments immediately around us which we cannot procure. Our privations were many and great, but they were for the most part inevitable. After the first few months we had the best procurable in our situation, and far more than those around us. So, every man in such a place will learn that wealth, after all, is a sentiment more than a condition, a feeling rather than a fact. But the return to civilization is like a sudden reversal of fortune, and in dire contrast a man experiences a very painful and oppressive sense of poverty when confronted with wealth so far beyond his own.

We gave out various goods in pay to workmen engaged upon our premises. We bought food for the workmen and some for ourselves. The staple article of exchange was salt : one might almost call it the currency. There is so little of it that there is a chronic hunger for it. Children like it better than sugar. A teaspoonful of salt is the price of an egg. We also gave in exchange beads, shirt-buttons, brass rods, red-caps, knives, gun-flints, and later in the year we began to sell a little cloth. We bought bananas, plantains, cassava (that which Stanley calls "manioc," which is their principal food) and building-material. All exchange is by barter, and it is a very tedious and trying process, a long palaver being regarded as almost essential to propriety even in the purchase of the smallest article. In trading among themselves the man who can talk longest and loudest usually gets the best of the bargain. The maintaining of a fixed price is new to the African and is hateful to him, even if the price be good, for it tends to deprive him of the palaver, which is the joy of his life. He makes the best of the fixed price however and even discovers that it still has some dramatic and histrionic possibilities. He lays down his bamboo, or his thatch, before me, telling me in a neighbourly manner how far he has had to go for it and how exceedingly scarce it is becoming, how unusually good this particular material is and what lavish offers he received for it along the way, and how friendship for the white man prevailed over baser considerations. For, what were he and his people before the white man came? But now, as for himself, he has left behind all his vices, and that very morning has decided to be a Christian.

I interrupt this fine flow of sentiment by asking him what he wants in exchange for his thatch. He thinks he will take a little salt. I measure out with a spoon the

exact amount—which he knew before he left his town. The dramatic moment is when I put away the spoon. He glances from the salt to myself several times with a fine simulation of disappointment and contempt, calculated to reduce me to pulp. He is no child in his art, but such an adept that my moral fortitude almost surrenders before that look. I seek to relieve the strain by saying with affected carelessness: “That’s all. Take your salt and get out.”

The reply to this delicate suggestion is a prolonged yell of many mingled emotions: and then he grabs,—not the salt, but his thatch and starts down the hill cursing the white man. I have not so much affronted his judgment as I have wounded his feelings, and perhaps have put a stumbling-block in the way of his salvation. He thinks better of it, however, and comes back, takes the salt and goes away blessing me.

It was hard to procure eggs. The natives do not eat eggs but always set them. At first they asked the price of a chicken for an egg, because, they said, the egg would become a chicken, with proper treatment. The time element is always eliminated in every consideration. But most of the eggs that they brought us would never have become chickens under any circumstances; and this they knew, for they had given them a thorough trial. When I pronounce an egg to be bad a man always wants it back; for he or his friend will try to sell it to me again, watching an opportunity when I am very busy and have not time to examine it closely. I have probably refused the same egg half a dozen times in one morning, and then perhaps have bought it, and the successful vender has amused the people of his town by relating the transaction at my expense.

The women bring their garden produce in heavy loads carried on their backs in large baskets. I stand on the

porch as I buy and they on the ground, their produce lying on the porch at my feet. They always rise very early, and they usually reach the hill about daylight. We cannot buy more than half of the food they bring ; so there is a noisy and animated scramble for first place. They are there before we are up in the morning and they wait in a shed occupied by our men a little way down the hill and in front of our house. There they indulge in chatter and laughter, and one might think they had forgotten their errand. But the moment I open the door and step outside (for it fell to me to do the buying) every woman, with a yell, snatches her basket and pitches it on her back, or perhaps comes dragging it along the ground, thinking in this way to gain a moment over her sisters, and pushing and pulling each other, some of them laughing, more of them cursing, and all of them yelling, the whole fanfare sweeps up to the door. Not having been accustomed to rise so early, my sense of humour is still dormant at that hour ; life is always a serious matter to me and a doubtful boon until after breakfast. I yawn, and yawn again, and heave a weary sigh, as I reflect that the clamorous noise which has thus ushered in the day will continue through the long hours until its close.

Soon after our arrival at Efulen Dr. Good and I visited the town of an old chief of some fame, named Abesula. Abesula's claim to greatness was based upon the possession of thirty-five wives and any man who could endure life with thirty-five African wives must be made of uncommon stuff. He was old and most of them were young and unmarry, and each one seemed disposed to do her full duty in reconciling him to death by making his present life intolerable. As we entered the town an old woman who knew Dr. Good and was very glad to see him came forward to salute him, calling him his usual name, *Ngoot*. She was covered thick with redwood powder, like red

oxide, from head to feet, and he was dressed in light-coloured clothes and was quite trim, for we had travelled by a good road. In a salutation of "linked sweetness long drawn out"—"Ay! Ngoo-t, Ngoo-t, Ngoo-t," she threw her arms around him and embraced him affectionately, leaving him covered with redwood powder. Other women, evidently thinking that this was the proper way to receive a white man, followed her example. Now, one of Dr. Good's peculiarities was an insuperable aversion to effusions of emotion. But he always considered the effect of his actions upon the mind or the feelings of the natives; so he submitted to this tender ceremony, but he looked as miserable as ever Abesula did with his thirty-five wives all calling him names at once. Then the old woman, not wishing to show partiality, approached me with an amiable, toothless smile and all the redwood that was not on Dr. Good's clothes; but regardless of consequences I took to my heels and bestowed myself at a safe distance down the street, feeling that I had made sacrifices enough for the black race to be morally excusable for declining this unsavoury embrace.

In the evening we sang several hymns to draw the people together. They all came and Abesula sat in the midst. Then Dr. Good preached to them, and some paid close attention. But after a while Abesula, interrupting, said: "Ngoot, won't you soon be through preaching? For I wish that you two white men would sing and dance for the people; I don't care for singing without dancing, and I don't like preaching at all." But we did not resort to this sensational method of holding a congregation.

That same evening a score of Abesula's wives engaged in a general quarrel with each other. An African family has no skeletons in the closet. They all hang outside the front door. The quarrel began with two of them, who, earlier in the evening, sat each within the door of her

own house, on opposite sides of the street, reviling each other in language of loathsome indecency, until at last, when their intellectual resources of warfare were exhausted, the other women told them to come out into the street and fight it out. Whereupon the two women came out into the street and throwing off even their scant apparel of leaves, began to fight. To our surprise they did not scratch nor pull each other's hair, as we had heard that women do when they fight. It was more like wrestling, although blows were delivered according to opportunity. They were fairly matched; but at last one was thrown to the ground, the other falling on top, and then clasping each other and fighting they rolled over and over in the street. When one of them was beaten the other women began to take sides and a large number became involved. Then the indiscreet Abesula interfered and they all joined together against him. To say that this large and unhappy family washed the dirty linen of their domestic infelicity in the street is putting it too mildly. The linen was foul and fit only for the fire. The women sought to shame the old savage out of countenance by the revelation of filthy secrets—but there are no secrets in Africa. Abesula replied with a shocking history of their immoralities which I fear was too true. He raged like an infuriated beast. He asked for a stick. Some one brought him one about ten feet long. As he talked he beat the ground with the stick and when it broke in his hands he called for another. He cursed them and threatened them with the hostility of supernatural powers by which they would die various sudden deaths in surprising forms, and suffer frightful penalties in another world. All this while he was pounding the ground, in which performance it was supposed that his wives were beaten by proxy. It was a very forcible way of expressing his opinion of them, and of showing them what their

conduct deserved, while it was safer for himself and more conducive to good health and a long life, than a personal attack upon them, seeing that it was one against thirty-five.

But finding at length that this bloodless flogging even when accompanied with awful language produced no other result than self-exhaustion and violent perspiration, he resolved to kill himself without actually dying—a simple paradox to the African mind. He brought out of his house a long knife and a lighted torch, and carefully arranging a seat in the middle of the street where all could witness the shedding of his blood, he sharpened the knife, made his last speech, in which he told his wives how he would haunt them after death, then raised the knife above him, threw back his head, and pointed the knife towards his breast. This tragical performance requires that at this interesting moment some one, preferably a wife, should rush towards him in terrible alarm and excitement and wrench the knife from his hand just in time to save his life. This touching evidence of regard is a first measure of reconciliation and is usually followed by a truce of hostilities. But Abesula had made life so bitter for these women that their contempt was unbounded and they desired no armistice. Not one of them moved to save his life. He still held the knife above him, as if to say: “Is no one going to interfere? Is it possible that you would allow a great man like me to take his own life when you could so easily prevent it? At least think of the trouble it will entail, the grave-digging, the burial, a month of mourning, and perhaps charges of witchcraft.” Still no one moved. Abesula suddenly resolved to sharpen his knife again so as to make death quite certain. This being done he again raised it and pointed it towards his heart. A native man said to Dr. Good: “Stop him! white man, stop him! Take the knife from him!” And it may be that the women

had been expecting a white man to perform this obliging duty. But neither of us moved. At last the knife descended, and with such terrible force that it would have been driven into his heart and clean through his back if it had not been that his arm was trembling with excessive determination, and the descending knife, missing aim, struck the ground, penetrating nearly to the hilt. Poor Abesula, inconsolable at finding himself still alive, and feeling that his dignity, if not his life, was gone forever, rose from the ground and sneaked away. But he cast a baleful look backward, as if to say, "For two beads I'd destroy this world and make another where great men could be appreciated. As for you black creatures, you don't know a great man when you see him."

Later that night when all had retired to sleep, Dr. Good and I were still discussing polygamy, that some white people assert is right and necessary for Africa.

Mr. E. D. Morel points to the triumphs of Mohammedanism in Africa as a proof of its better adaptation to the moral and material welfare of the people than Christianity, attributing its success to its allowance of polygamy. But Mr. Morel's friend, Sir Harry Johnston, than whom perhaps no man living knows more about Central Africa and its people, accounts for the rapid spread of Mohammedanism in a very simple and obvious manner, when he says: "Mohammedanism, as taught to the negro, demands no sacrifice of his bodily lusts." Mohammedanism does improve the African—there is nothing gained by denying it. But, at best, it only "moves the masses to a cleaner style," which, though cleaner, is still a "style"; while the aim of Christianity is a *household*, in which the law is *love*, not lust. It is natural that it should take the negro longer to learn this lesson and that he should be slow in making the sacrifices that it demands.

In the morning Abesula seemed to have forgotten all about the palaver, as if it were a very ordinary occurrence, as I presume it really was. We rewarded him for the house that we had occupied by a gift of a red-cap (cost, five cents), the remains of our tallow candle and six lumps of white sugar.

VIII

AFTER A YEAR

MY progress in acquiring the language was greatly retarded by my long sickness, and by more than one prolonged stay at the coast. But the language is easy. At the end of a year I was conducting Sabbath services in Dr. Good's absence and preaching in a stammering way. Mr. Kerr was speaking the language much better than I; and Dr. Good had actually translated the Gospels, though it was a tentative translation that he knew would soon need revision. We were also penetrating a little beneath the surface of native life, seeing with other eyes and beginning to realize its degradation and to feel deeply its misery and sadness.

When we three white men, on our way to Efulen, entered the first Bulu town, the old chief asked Dr. Good whether we were brothers. When Dr. Good replied that we were not, the old man, turning slowly towards his people, with an incredulous laugh exclaimed: "What a lie!" It seemed impossible that three men who were not brothers could travel together in the forest and not kill each other.

One day I heard a sudden outcry of great alarm from a village at the foot of our hill. Several men of that village were at our station at the time, and with a shout they started for home. I quickly followed them and saw as I entered the village that a tragedy had occurred. I afterwards learned that four of their prominent men had been shot. They were hunting in the forest and not suspecting

danger, when another party, who were really friendly, mistook them for enemies in the dark forest, and shot all four. This is a kind of mistake that occurs frequently. The native would rather kill ten friends than let one enemy escape; so they often kill first and investigate afterwards. The village was very small and the loss of four stalwart men left them insufficiently protected against their enemies. This day the four bodies had been found in the forest and the news had just reached the village. Instantly, all the wives of those men stripped off their scant clothing of leaves, smeared their bodies with clay and running into the garden of bananas threw themselves on the ground tearing their hair and screaming, while the other women of the village gathered around and tried to comfort them. There was more than one reason for this demonstration. In part it was probably genuine grief; but there was also a strong element of fear, the fear of every wife whose husband dies from any cause whatsoever, that she will be charged with having bewitched him and suffer the penalty of death, perhaps by being buried alive with the dead body of her husband. For in this instance of the four men, it would be said, that they wore upon their necks certain fetishes that would have made them invisible to any one attempting to do them harm, and that evidently the spell of witchcraft had broken the power of the fetish. The fact that a man's wife, or wives, are the first to be charged with his death, implying that they would be more likely than others to desire it, throws a lurid light upon their social relations and incidentally upon polygamy. The African wife everywhere is an artist in the use of poison.

In that entire year at Efulen I do not remember that there was one natural death, though we never ceased to hear their mourning for the dead. In those tribes where no degree of civilization is yet established it is esti-

mated that nineteen out of twenty Africans die by violence. And when one comes to know the people individually and by name, instead of by impersonal figures, one realizes something of the enormity of wrong and suffering covered by this record.

One of the friendliest of the natives who had been coming to see us almost every day, a young man of splendid physique, was dragged up the hill to our door, unconscious, a bullet from an enemy's gun having penetrated his forehead, breaking the skull and laying bare the brain. With their coarse knives they had tried to dig the pieces of broken bone out of the wound. That war began with the stealing of a woman, or rather her elopement with a man of another town. The reason she gave was that her husband was so homely she could not live with him. The man probably had no wife and had no possible means of procuring the very large dowry necessary for her purchase. The town from which the woman was stolen, according to native custom, at the very first opportunity killed a person belonging to the town to which the woman was taken. Then the other town killed several of their people. During this war the people of the more distant town could not reach Efulen, and those of the nearer town brought their guns when they attended our service on Sunday and sat with them in their hands, ready for instant action. The war between the two towns continued until twelve persons had been killed, eight on one side and four on the other. Then another woman was stolen, and another war began and this first one was settled in a great palaver, which was called in a neutral town, the people of the two opposing towns being gathered together and sitting on opposite sides of the street. After endless oratory, some of it weak enough and some of it eloquent, it was agreed that one side, having killed four more than the enemy, should pay over to them four

women, and the town to which the man belonged who had first stolen the woman should collectively pay a proper dowry. Having thus agreed they returned to their respective towns and it remained only to name the four women who should be given over to the other town. Dr. Good and I were present when the old chief, after taking counsel with the elders, named the four women. The whole town was assembled. As he pronounced each name there was a shriek and a woman fled to the bush ; but a number of men knowing the name beforehand, caught her, dragged her back into the street, while she struggled and threw herself on the ground as if she were trying to kill herself. But it was useless. They bound them with bush-rope and they were taken away. Upon reaching the other town, they would become the wives of the chief, or others upon whom he might magnanimously bestow them. My impression is that at first they are usually regarded with ill-will. Sometimes, when a woman seems not to be reconciled to her lot, her feet are put in stocks until she is brought into subjection ; but in time she submits to the inevitable and makes the best of it. I have known instances among the Fang where such women were regarded as slaves.

Yet in all their degradation there was still something childlike about them. We found them always interesting and even lovable ; and though so far below our own moral level, our sympathy was not repelled by their degradation. One upon the mountain top may seem far above his fellows ; but, when he looks up, the infinite stars are equally above them all. The higher our ideals the more lowly our hearts, the more sane and broad our sympathies.

It ought not to be expected that we would accomplish any individual or social transformation in a brief year. Only with length of time can even a divine religion, so

long as it leaves men free, transform the customs of ages, and in minds knowing only animal desires, create new and noble ideals. Without doubt the new truth that we taught had become more intelligible and above all, they grasped its practical import. We not only preached but practiced justice, honesty, truthfulness, and kindness (to their amazement), and they interpreted our creed by our practice. For they themselves were preachers of righteousness before they ever heard of the white man ; but it was in *doing* that they lacked. We felt at the end of the year that they understood us, and recognized our moral principles as right : and this was a great advance.

But the actual reforms among them were for the most part merely superficial and scarcely moral. Some of them developed a passion for clothes, which they regarded as mere ornamentation. It is sometimes said that we missionaries preach a "Gospel of cloth" mistaking clothes for morality. And a superficial observer at Efulen would probably have supposed that the ludicrous effort of the people to clothe themselves was the result of our teaching and advice. But it was due only to their ready habit of imitation ; and as a matter of fact we were disposed to discourage it. For one of the first lessons that the white man learns in Africa is that clothes and morality are not so nearly related as he had supposed. It is preferable in this as in everything else that knowledge should precede practice : otherwise, the results will be at least grotesque and often injurious to health. One man is dressed in the crown or the brim of a hat ; another wears a pair of cast-off shoes, or perhaps one shoe, while his friend wears the other ; and even when they are new he is indifferent about shoe-strings. One man will wear as his entire outfit a ragged coat of inhuman proportions ; another wears a pair of trousers that have outworn all the buttons, while his whole time and attention are occupied

in keeping them on, and with indifferent success. Such rags of clothing turn these fine and manly-looking fellows into low-down rowdies or even into the semblance of apes. Nor do they always know the *gender* of the garments shown them in the trading-houses, and not all the traders will assist their taste. One may sometimes see a tall chief dressed in a pink or blue Mother Hubbard. At the coast I once saw a stalwart bushman, who had just disposed of an ivory, "dressed to kill" in a lady's undergarment, fresh from the box, snow-white and trimmed with delicate embroidery. He was so proud as he strutted along that he could scarcely speak.

But clothes, until they have learned to take proper care of them, are often injurious to their health. They will keep these garments on night and day, wet or dry, and may not take them off till they fall off. It is worse with shoes. The feet of the native are shod with natural sole-leather; and if they were not, the bush-paths would be impassable for him. But he wears his shoes through mud and water, and keeps them on at night. The result is that they make his feet tender, besides injuring his health.

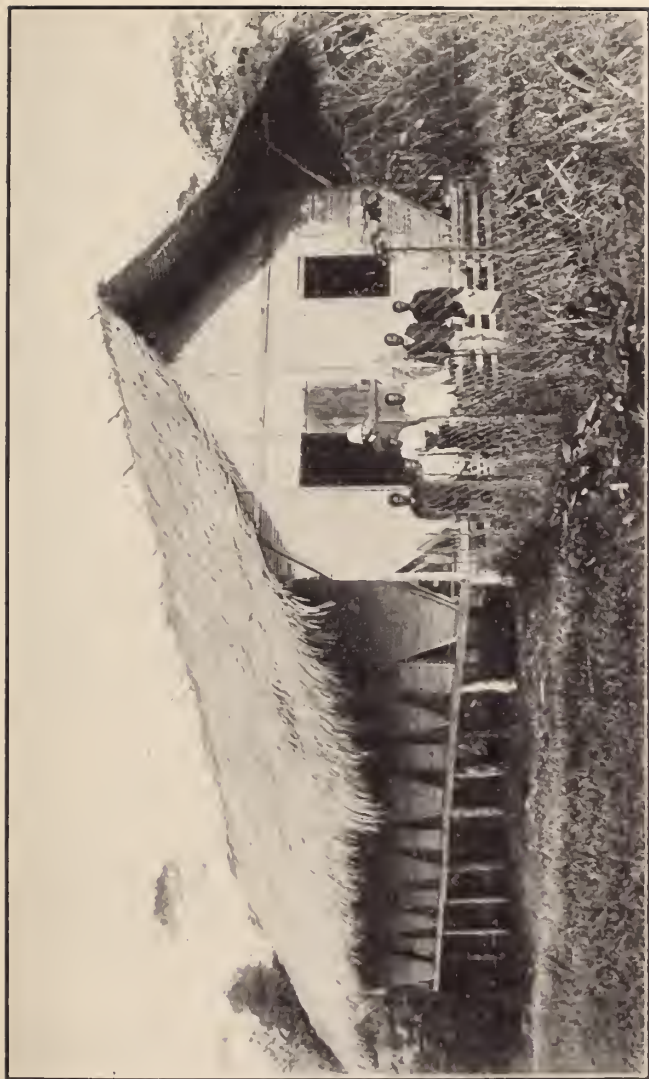
Shortly after we went to Efulen, such was the passion for clothes that if one should throw away an old pair of socks instead of burning them, no matter where they might be thrown, one might count on it that somebody, probably a boy, would soon appear in the yard wearing those socks, sometimes on his hands instead of his feet, thinking that they would last longer. One day when I decided that a certain pair of shoes were no longer fit to wear, I took them out into the yard and placing them on a block, took an axe, and proceeded to chop them into small pieces. All the natives in the yard, visitors and workmen, came running to me and loudly begged for the shoes with outstretched hands. But oblivious to their

clamorous entreaties, I kept swinging the axe and compelling them to stand back. When I had finished I asked them what they wanted, explaining that I could not swing an axe and listen to them at the same time, especially when they were all talking at once. They turned away with looks of disgust.

A certain chief at Efulen succeeded in procuring a suit of bright blue denim. The following Sunday the family came to our service with the suit divided between them, the women having divested themselves of the native attire. The old man wore the coat, his wife followed with the trousers, and a grown daughter brought up the rear with the vest. Of course they came late, and walked to a front seat. The missionaries were supposed to maintain their gravity. I was not there myself and am indebted to Mr. Kerr for the incident.

My visits to the coast were like coming back to civilization; such was the contrast of Batanga and Efulen. And, besides, there was a white child at the coast, little Frances, a dear little girl about a year old, whom I carried in my arms much of the time that I was there. For I have already told how one longs for the sight of a white child. During those visits to the coast I often preached in the Batanga Church and I became well acquainted with that congregation. By their progress of a few years and by the Christian character of many individuals known to me, I was accustomed to measure the possibilities of the Bulu and the prospect of our work.

The first Sunday after my arrival in Africa I preached in the church at Batanga. I had carefully packed away every article of better clothing, including all starched linen, and all my shirts, and was wearing a suit which I had purchased at a trading-house for two dollars. I have reason to remember this from what Dr. Good said afterwards. He told me that when I landed from the steamer



THE OLD CHURCH AT BATANGA.

The walls are of split bamboo and the roof of palm thatch. The triangular openings serve both for ventilation and exorcism.

he surveyed me with eager curiosity, and that I had somehow impressed him with a doubt as to whether I would be able to adapt myself to our bush-life. But when he entered the Batanga Church the following Sunday and saw me standing in the pulpit divested of collar, cuffs and shirt, and dressed in a suit that everybody knew had cost exactly two dollars, doubt was banished, and to a fellow missionary he expressed his changed mind in the emphatic words: "He'll do." But surely in Africa and everywhere else our dress should be that which is proper to our work and our surroundings.

The Batanga Church had a membership of four hundred, and the attendance was very large. The present edifice is a hideous and expensive structure of foreign material, altogether inappropriate to native conditions and a disfigurement in the landscape. But the old church of those days, while not sufficient in size, was admirable in other respects and picturesque—elevated on posts and with a board floor, bamboo walls, and roof of palm thatch. Along the base of the walls, at regular intervals, were large triangular openings for ventilation. But the people being accustomed to leave all matters of ventilation and sanitation to providence, evidently supposed that these openings were intended for their accommodation in expectorating. For the habit of expectoration is fixed and constant, and is as characteristic of Africa as noise. One does not object to it so much among bush people, who usually assemble outside, and in whose houses there are only ground floors. But when they begin to be civilized it is more noticeable and becomes offensive. The majority of the Batanga people, with the native instinct of good manners, were just sufficiently civilized to know that it is bad form to spit on the floor, but *not* sufficiently civilized to break off the habit entirely. During the service they continually expectorated

through the openings in the walls, and especially the women. It seemed that the more interested they became in the sermon the more fluently they expectorated. My attention was arrested and almost diverted by the uncertainty and suspense whenever I saw an old woman on the inside end of a pew, lean forward, twist her head to one side, take deliberate aim, and fire past six persons. She never missed the hole—unless some one of those between her and the wall should happen to move or lean forward just at the wrong moment, which of course was not her fault. The appearance which this habit presented outside the church always recalled what Dickens said of this same habit in America—that the appearance outside the windows of a railway coach was as if some one inside were ripping open a feather tick.

The men and women sit on different sides of the church and I believe that in their stage of civilization it is best that they should thus be separated, though sometimes it is attended with inconvenience. For instance, a father may have charge of a baby that wants its mother ; and if so it may be passed from one to another across the entire church, as I have seen, dangling by one little arm, and with no covering but that which nature has provided in its black skin. The large majority are dressed and there is nothing grotesque or foolish in their costumes. Most of the men wear a white undershirt and a large square robe of cotton, usually of bright colours, bound around the waist and falling almost to the feet. This is the most becoming male dress in Africa ; and the black man in his own climate always looks best in bright colours. A few of the men, in too great haste to be civilized, wear shirts and trousers, the trousers a manifest misfit and the shirt outside the trousers. This mode of wearing the shirt, however, I would not criticise ; it is charmingly naive, and rather sensible when one becomes accustomed to it.

The women wear a similar square robe of bright cotton, or better material, bound around immediately below the arms, leaving the shoulders bare, and falling to their feet. But among them are many, both men and women, who wear a smaller cloth, bound around the waist and falling to the knees, with nothing on the upper body. Individuals have different costumes but these are the types; and the types are so established that anything eccentric or much out of style would occasion a smile. People of the bush sometimes straggle into the service so absurdly dressed that the gravity of the entire congregation is upset. It was so one Sunday when the following incident occurred.

While I had fever at Efulen, being obliged to change clothing frequently, I discarded pajamas for nightshirts. They were long ones that reached to my feet. These when taken off were usually hung near the fire to dry, where the smoke stained and discoloured them. When I was well I discarded them. Mr. Kerr, for some reason, presented one to a Bulu man. Soon afterwards the man visited the coast and of course took this wonderful garment with him. What is the use of having fine clothes if one is not to show them off? The Bulu man, looking very grand in my stained nightshirt, attended the service in the Batanga Church, came late, of course, and walked up the long aisle to a front seat, while the large congregation made an agonizing effort to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." But there were a number of missionaries present and they had heard me speak of those garments and their extreme discolouration by the smoke; and when they saw the Bulu enter they immediately recognized the garment.

Some of the Batanga people had begun to wear shoes, though there is no need of them and they look better without them. They have a preference for heavy shoes

that will make a noise as they walk up the aisle, otherwise people might not know that they had them. But above all, they must have shoes with "squeaking" soles,—or, as the natives say, shoes that "talk"; and the first question a native asks when he would buy a pair of shoes is: "Do they talk proper loud?" They wear black shoe-strings when they cannot get pink or white. Some of them are so uncomfortable that they remove their shoes during the service.

The collection at the Batanga service was gathered only occasionally and was unique in quality and quantity—chickens, bananas, cassava, sweet potatoes, dried fish, pieces of cloth, shirts, hats, knives, boards, etc.

But I had occasion frequently to review the records of the session of the church, and of realizing the undercurrents of the lives of those people; and there I found nothing amusing. It was a sad, sad story of pathos and dire tragedy. There were confessions of weak failure; but there were other confessions of defeat only after long and brave fighting against temptations which those in Christian lands cannot conceive and which I cannot relate. There were stories of domestic sorrow. A Christian man tells the session that he did not partake of the communion because his heart was full of bitterness against his heathen wife for her unfaithfulness and immorality. A Christian woman declares that she refused to marry a man who had other wives. She was tied hands and feet and carried to his house. Another woman tells the wrongs she endured from a heathen husband. A broken-hearted father tells that he had not lately attended the services because the death of his only son had filled him with doubt of God's goodness. A widowed mother also confesses doubt because God had taken away her only son. These are the *weak* Christians who have been called before the session; and these are the men and women at whose weaknesses

travellers and other critics would laugh and point the finger of scorn, and because of them condemn the entire congregation of those who profess to be Christians. The majority of white men in Africa judge the native Christians without mercy, and they judge the whole native church by its weakest member. At Las Palmas, on Grand Canary Island, I tasted a fresh fig for the first time in my life and pronounced it "disgusting," whereupon a native Spaniard, a judge of figs, looking at me, said: "O, sir, you are eating a bad one!" He was right. I was eating a bad fig and judging the whole species by that one. It is thus that many white men judge the native Christians of Africa.

Prominent in the Batanga Church, and always present at the service, was a woman, Bekalida, noted in her tribe for her good looks, but in these latter years smitten with a disease that had horribly disfigured her, and had eaten away her entire nose. When this calamity befell her she was so overwhelmed with grief and shame that for a long time she could not bear to be seen in public. But at last, with her face covered, she appeared in the little prayer-meeting of women conducted by her great friend, Miss Nassau, and there, in pathetic and eloquent words, she poured out her heart while they wept, and told them how that she had been vain and proud until the Lord in His love had smitten her; how that during the long weeks of her affliction faith forsook her. Her heart was hard and rebellious and she felt that she could not bear her shame; but she yearned for that comfort that only God could give; she came to Jesus again in penitence and He received her and her heart was filled with the peace of God; for it was better to be disfigured than to be vain and proud.

In that same congregation there was one Mbula, who afterwards became a minister; a young man of simple

manners and godly life. Growing up in the midst of African degradation, he was yet pure, strong and manly. He developed unusual gifts as a preacher, simplicity and force, fluency of speech and a charming grace of manner that many white ministers might envy. There was another young man, Eduma, who also became a minister and is to-day an influential leader among those who are striving to live in a higher and better way than they have hitherto known. Already from that congregation missionaries have gone to the Bulu, whom they formerly despised. At least one of those missionaries, Ndenga, has lived a life, and done a work, of faith and devotion that is fitted to surprise and to convince all those who have seriously doubted whether the African is capable of a high ideal and of patient performance.

Towards the end of our first year among the Bulu it was very plain that a change had taken place in our relations to them. They had become convinced that our persons were not inviolable as they had first thought and that we had no fetishes to serve us as a potent protection; while, on the other hand, though we had steadily gained their regard, it might be doubted whether their friendship was yet sufficient for our security. If there is ever any danger of violence it is in this period of transition. One or two incidents will illustrate the change of feeling.

In a certain town which Dr. Good and I once visited, much farther in the interior and where no white man had ever been before, a young Bulu man came to us at the close of the service and addressing us in English said: "I sabey English mouf." Imagine our surprise! He gave us some account of himself.

His name was Keli. When a child he had been taken by his father on a visit to a neighbouring tribe. While there he was stolen from his father and taken to a distant village where he became a slave. Some time afterwards



PASTOR AND ELDERS OF THE BATANGA CHURCH.

he was taken to the coast and sold to a chief of the coast tribe. Finally the chief sold him to a white man, who in turn gave him to another white man and he was taken to Gaboon. His master was a Frenchman, and Keli was his personal attendant. The boy made himself so useful that when the Frenchman went on furlough to France he took him along. After living in Paris a considerable time the Frenchman concluded not to return to Africa; whereupon he sent Keli to England and gave him into the charge of an English trader who was expecting soon to sail for Africa. With this trader Keli returned to Africa. Not long after this the trader having occasion to visit Batanga took Keli with him. This was his opportunity. In the night he fled to the forest. Finally he fell in with a caravan going to the Bulu country, and at last reached his town, after an absence of seven years, during which his father and mother had died, and he had been long forgotten. Keli had not been trained by his various masters in wisdom and judgment, and he made the mistake of telling the people all that he had seen in Paris and London—all about the big buildings and multitudes of people, all about the clothes they wore and the very cold season of snow and ice, all about horses and carriages and railway trains—quite overtaxing their credulity, and earning the reputation of a notorious liar and incorrigible fool. Missionaries sometimes make the same mistake and pay the same penalty.

Meantime Keli had become accomplished to the extent of knowing French and English and five native dialects. But, alas! how destitute of moral power is civilization alone! Keli did not seem to have any moral ideas. The restraining fear of his former fetishism had been expelled, and no moral motive implanted. His morality was much below that of the average Bulu, except in the shedding of blood. Nothing but long familiarity can make that an

indifferent matter to any man however degraded ; and Keli had a horror of blood. We took him home with us to Efulen and made him cook and houseboy, for we were in our usual strait at the time. He knew his work well and was unapproached in service for the short time that he behaved. But at the first opportunity, one Sunday during the service, Keli captured and stole a chicken, the mother of a young brood. He strewed feathers along a bush-path to make believe that a wild animal had taken it. Of course it will be remembered that among a people who have so little, a chicken is one of the high values. The theft was not insignificant in the mind of the Bulu. But for us the really serious import of the matter was that it raised the question as to whether they could steal from us with impunity, or with any possibility of not being detected. They had never attempted it before, being restrained by the dread of our supposed fetishes, which Keli knew to be a delusion. I need not say that we had never fostered the delusion, yet it had served a providential use. It was now likely to be dispelled and we were not certain as to the consequences. Keli immediately killed the chicken and gave it to a Bulu man, his accomplice, who wrapped it in a loin-cloth and took it to his town while Keli himself came running to me in great distress, as soon as the service was concluded, telling a most interesting story of a bushcat that he had seen just as it was disappearing with the chicken, and how he had given chase and had tried to rescue it. Of course I suspected himself, but I said nothing until, by a chain of evidence that I have forgotten, I traced it to him. We made him a prisoner, and Dr. Good soon wrung a confession from him. He said he would find the chicken—which, however, having lost its head, could never be the same chicken again. I took him to town still a prisoner, a workman walking behind him with a rope around his

waist. He led me through the town to the house of his accomplice. Entering the house he proceeded directly to the bed and from underneath it produced the ehicken, wrapped in the cloth of the other thief.

I took the ehicken and the cloth and started back to the station, still accompanied by Keli, and a long procession of natives. I had gone but a short distance when the owner of the cloth with a number of men following, came running from behind, and dashing past me with a shout, immediately turned about, placed himself in the narrow path before me, and with his long knife in his raised arm demanded his cloth. It may have been mere bluff on his part, one cannot tell. The chief danger, if there was any, was not their natural brutality so much as their excitement. Of course I could not yield to a demand that was really a threat and so bring us into contempt. But I was far from comfortable and I would gladly have made a present of the entire incident to my worst enemy. My resources were, in the first place, straight bluff, and second, the moral prestige of the white man. Keeping my eye fixed upon him I ordered him out of the path, and as he did not obey, I suddenly struck him as heavy a blow as I could,—so suddenly that he was taken completely off his guard and was thrown headlong into the thicket, while I passed on. Surprised more than hurt, it took him some time to recover himself and to take counsel with his fellows. Meantime, wishing to avoid an ugly palaver, and still to retain personal authority, I unfolded the cloth, discovered before the eyes of the people that it was very dirty and full of holes, laughed at it and got them to laugh, and finally threw it aside, saying: "Tell him that this cloth is not fit for a white man to take." As I moved on I heard the man and his friends coming again, running and yelling; but as he came up the people shouted

that they had his cloth, and the sight of it appeased his anger.

That night we kept Keli a prisoner in our house. Dr. Good thought that in our peculiar situation we could not afford to let him go unpunished. With great reluctance he advised that he ought to be flogged in the presence of the people. He was always kind and considerate towards the natives, but he was not a man who would shirk a duty because it was disagreeable. For myself, my mind was not quite clear that flogging was a moral necessity. But I knew Dr. Good well and had learned to trust him, so I consented that he should do as he thought best. The next morning, therefore, he and I took Keli down to the principal town, and having called all the people together, Dr. Good told them, in native fashion, the story of Keli's wrong. And he added that in view of Keli's youth and the hard circumstances of his life he had decided that he would only flog him and dismiss him. Thereupon, with a rod prepared for the purpose, he began to administer the flogging.

Now, if I were relating fiction and not reality, I should certainly proceed to have Keli properly flogged and the mind of the community deeply impressed in consequence. But as reality never quite attains the ideal, and as I may not substitute imagination for history in this sober narrative, I must tell of "the slip twixt the cup and the lip." Prominent among Keli's moral discrepancies was cowardice; and even before the rod descended for the first time he uttered a scream that evidently startled Dr. Good, for he let go his hold and Keli bounded from him. Dr. Good chased him and could easily have caught him but it had been raining and the clay surface of the street was smooth and slippery, giving Keli's bare feet a decided advantage. They both resembled amateur performers on roller skates. The chase that followed seemed

to appeal peculiarly to the humour of the natives, which was the more excessive because of the strong reaction from fear and apprehension. They laughed wildly. Keli led the way around the palaver-house once or twice, then down the street, Dr. Good following him close and reaching after him, while he administered what would have been a severe flogging but that the strokes persistently fell about twelve inches behind Keli's shoulders, affording him, I imagine, an acute realization of the old adage, "A miss is as good as a mile." Soon they reached a steep slope in the street, and Keli, steadily gaining, at last made his escape. I, looking on, maintained an exterior of stern gravity that was the very antithesis of my feeling. But deeper than outward gravity and inward laughter I was praying that nothing might happen to impede Keli's steady progress; for this flogging in pantomime served to impress a moral lesson, while it left no marks on poor Keli's skin, whom seven tribes and nations had helped to degrade. I should not wonder if Dr. Good himself felt somewhat as I did.

On our way home Dr. Good intimated to me the moral propriety of not mentioning the incident to Mr. Kerr or any of the missionaries at the coast, for I was soon going to the coast.

"Indeed," said I, "you could not possibly bribe me to silence regarding the episode of this morning. It would be a great wrong, in this weary land, to deprive my fellow missionaries of such an entertainment, and I am really thinking of going to the coast a day earlier than I had expected."

No man could yield to the inevitable with better grace than Dr. Good. Before we reached home he was laughing; and he was even disposed to anticipate me in telling the story, which he did with dramatic effects and graphic touches inimitable.

It was not long after this that the Bulu conceived the idea of wresting from us a higher price for all articles of native food. When we refused their demand they all joined together in a boycott. Our position was serious enough ; for we had a number of workmen from the coast whose entire food we purchased from the Bulu. We happened to have rice on hand which for the time we gave the men and which was sufficient to last several days. Meantime, it happened that there was more sickness than usual. Some of the principal chief's wives had bad ulcers and were coming daily for treatment. But one day when our rice was nearly exhausted, Dr. Good turned them all away, saying that he would treat them when the people would bring food. This was a possibility that had never occurred to them. A few days later they decided to bring food and end the boycott. But now that they had once attempted it there was need that we should always be prepared by having on hand a supply of rice.

About this time I went to the coast expecting to remain only a few days and return with a large caravan ; for we were in need of many things. It was on this journey that the incident occurred which I have related, when my carriers lost their way with my bed and clothing and I suffered extreme exposure. The result was a fever immediately upon reaching the coast, and a second fever before I had sufficiently recovered from the first to set out for the interior, and then a third fever, the worst that I had had. If I could have reached Efulen I would probably have recovered ; for the climate of Batanga is dreadful. But the wet season, which had been coming on gradually was now at its worst, and cut off the possibility of a retreat to the interior, in my greatly reduced health. The last fever had been so serious that I could not risk another. There was only one thing to do. So, with the advice of all the missionaries at Batanga, I took the first

steamer that came, and fled from the coast, having been in Africa a year and a half. Nor did my health permit of my return to Africa for four full years. As I put out from the Batanga beach in a surf-boat and stood looking back at the receding shore while we rose and fell with the heavy waves of the evening sea, the last one that I saw was Mrs. Laffin, who again came out and waved her handkerchief. She was very well then ; but only a few weeks later she died.

A month after Mrs. Laffin's death came the dreadful news that Dr. Good had died. He was a man of iron constitution and such amazing vitality of body and mind that it seemed impossible to associate death with him. The unnaturalness of his death impressed me as might some great convulsion in nature ; as if a mountain had been uprooted and cast into the depths of the sea.

Mr. Kerr was at Efulen when Dr. Good died and several other missionaries had arrived.

While I was still there Dr. Good had planned a trip of three weeks into the interior further than he had yet gone with a view to choosing a site for another mission station ; but circumstances at Efulen led him to postpone the journey. At that time he received a message from a notorious and dreaded chief of the interior near the present Elat, warning him not to dare to come into his country, for that he would surely kill him. Dr. Good, however, continued his preparations for the journey. In the course of a long and serious conversation as to what it would be best to do in case that interior chief or any other should do him violence or should capture and detain him, he urged and exacted from me a promise that in any event the German government should not be called to his assistance, even to save his life. Not that he denied his right to protection but he knew the severity of the government, having recently witnessed it in a war upon a

neighbouring tribe. And indeed I myself had arrived in Africa in time to see something of the desolation of that war in the silent and smoking remains of towns from which the people (all who had escaped from the sword) had fled into the depths of the forest. For instance, two little boys who had just been taken into our school at Batanga had been found alone in the forest, and crying beside the dead body of their mother. I yielded to Dr. Good a reluctant promise as he desired ; for I could not controvert the moral principle which actuated this strong, brave-hearted man.

For other reasons he did not go at that time ; but not long after I left Africa, and upon the arrival of others, he set out upon this hard and uncertain journey. Perhaps he erred on the side of economy and indifference to comfort, not providing himself with everything procurable that could conserve his strength and vitality. He made extensive explorations of the interior, chose the site for a new station, returned to Efulen exhausted, and the next day was stricken with fever. The third day afterwards he died, having been delirious most of the time. He was only thirty-seven years old. His last conscious words were a message to the church at home, "See that I have not laboured in vain."

Great man and great missionary ! There was something about Dr. Good that always reminded one of Livingstone. Six years later, standing at his grave on Efulen hill, where every tree and every foot of ground were associated with his memory, I recalled the inscription in the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral, over the tomb of Sir Christopher Wren, its great architect. "If you ask a monument look around you." The Church of Efulen, the growth of which has since been marvellous, no costly pile of stone or marble, but of more precious human souls upon whose darkness the light of heaven

has dawned, the large congregation that gathers there to worship the true God, and the many changes in the community near and far—these are the lasting monuments of Dr. Good.

IX

THE KRUBOYS

IT was not on the voyage to Batanga, but on subsequent voyages along the lower coast, to the Congo, to St. Paul de Loanda and Benguela, that I was fully impressed with the service of the black man to the white and the disposition to cruelty on the part of the latter. For it is south of Batanga that the natives employed on the steamer do their hardest work. What I saw and heard on those several voyages gave ample food for reflection upon the moral danger of unrestrained authority and the unfitness of most men to govern their fellows of lower degree. I was allowed to remain absorbed in my own thoughts as there were but few passengers on board ; on one such journey I was the only passenger for three weeks out of five.

After leaving Sierra Leone on the outward voyage the course changes eastward. A few days later we sighted the coast of Liberia and nearly opposite Monrovia we anchored and waited for eighty black men who were shipped as workmen for the rest of the voyage. We anchored far out at sea ; for the Liberian coast is very rough and dangerous, and for most of the entire coast the latest charts are more than fifty years old.

These workmen belong to the Kru tribe. They do all the work of discharging and taking on cargo for the entire voyage, remaining on board for the round trip—usually three or four months—and receiving in payment

an average of a shilling a day. We do not call them "Krumen," but "Kruboys," for in Africa they are boys till they die.

The Kruboys are the "real thing," the Africans that you have pictured in your imagination and have read about, and at the sight of them coming off in a fleet of large canoes, accompanied by the whole population, almost stark naked—the majority wearing a bit of calico the size of a pocket-handkerchief—black and savage, and each of them yelling like ten savages, the ladies on board usually hurry down to their cabins and remain for a while in obscurity. Ropes are thrown over to the Kruboys and they climb the side of the ship like monkeys. At closer view they do not appear savage at all. Every face reveals laughing good-nature, and each man looking after his simple necessities in a businesslike way makes himself as comfortable as possible, and yells as loud as possible, while he asks for what he wants and declares to all on board what he is going to do, though he does not seem to expect anybody to listen to him or to pay any attention to him. There is considerable disputation, some quarrelling, and an occasional fight. They have a remarkable way of passing from laughter to quarrel and from fight to song by the easiest sort of transition: passion does not linger.

One soon becomes accustomed to their nakedness, and even the ladies seem to forget it. In this they are helped by the native's childlike unconsciousness of any breach of etiquette. Then sometimes one goes to the other extreme and thinks that there is nothing of the savage about them at all—barring the yell and a soon-discovered incorrigible indifference to the categories of "mine" and "thine" with consequent insecurity of all portable property. In this stage of developing opinion I have heard ladies pronounce them "perfectly lovely." And the

Old Coaster blandly informs them that they are "as innocent as lambs."

The Kruboy is of real negro stock, and is not so graceful, not so intellectual, not so gentle in manners, as the natives further south of the Calabar, the Bantu tribes, who are not classified as negroes. But the Kruboy's physique is magnificent, in size, development, and strength. They prefer to sleep in the companionway or some other sheltered place; but, as there is not room for all, most of them lie in their nakedness on the open deck, exposed to all kinds of weather. Their food is rice, salt pork, and sea biscuits. Their degradation is manifest not so much in the indecency that most people expect, as in their unappeasable hunger and greedy appetite. All food is "chop" to the Kruboy, and when he eats he "chops." You may not like this word—you may hate it; but you will be obliged to use it continually on the coast; and the Kruboy would not understand any substitute. One day the Kruboy were landing some salt at Batanga for our missionary, Mr. Gault, when the boat capsized in the surf and before they could recover it the salt had all dissolved in the sea. They came to Mr. Gault carrying the empty, dripping sacks, but absolutely indifferent to the loss, and said: "Massa, the sea done chop all them salt."

The English names of the Kruboy are interesting, and need some explanation. In the African languages there is no distinct vocabulary of "proper names." As it was with the Jews, and some other nations ancient and modern, so in Africa names are usually descriptive or commemorative of some incident, notable or otherwise, and any word, phrase, or sentence, may be so used. For instance on the Gaboon River there is a very small village, which, as I was entering it for the first time, one of my boat-boys described as consisting of four men, four women,

four houses, four goats, and four chickens ; but the name of it was *Bi Biana Milam*—*We Despise Big Towns*. I thought it was rather pathetic ; for I know how the big towns vex the little towns. Childlessness is a reproach and a great sorrow among African women ; and a certain woman in Gaboon who was advanced in years when she bore her first child gave him a name which means, “It-is-no-disgrace-to-be-childless.” These names sound far better in their own language.

But the Krubois of the steamers take English names which, to say the least, are not dignified, and are more absurd when the ship’s officers call them out in anger—and the ship’s officers are always angry when they talk to the Krubois. Frying-Pan, Black Kettle, Crowbar, Ham and Eggs, Liver and Bacon, Bottle of Beer, Whisky, Bag of Rice, Weariness, Three O’clock, Day-break, Half a Dinner, Castor Oil, Every Day, To-morrow, Never Tire, Sea Breeze, Jim Crow, Two Pounds Six, Smiles, Silence, My Friend, Gunpowder, Bayonet, Cartridge, Crocodile, Misery, Get-your-hair-cut, Tom Tom, Pagan and Shoo Fly are names I have heard.

While we are on this subject we may as well get acquainted with the Kru English, which is the “Pigeon English” of the coast. All Krubois “speak English Mouth” in this peculiar dialect. To people of intelligence and cultivation it is always very offensive at first. They especially cannot bear to hear white people use it ; nor does it seem to them in the least degree necessary. Good English is as simple and they think would be quite as easily understood by the black man. I remember well how it first affected me. I was disgusted when I was told that I would soon be speaking it myself. The first change in my feelings took place when I found that it had its method and its idiom. It is not “any old English.” There is correct and incorrect Kru English. It may

properly be regarded as a dialect. The African languages, however they may differ in vocabulary, have a common idiom. Kru English is simply the idiom of the African languages with an English vocabulary. There are some irregularities and a small number of importations from other tongues, the principal foreign word being "sabey" for "know," from the French "savez." One of its principal features is the use of the verb "live" for the verb "to be."

I stand in the doorway and call: "Half a Dinner!" and the answer comes back faintly: "I live for come."

If I want to ask a boy whether Shoo Fly has arrived, I say: "Shoo Fly live?" And as Shoo Fly never arrives when he is expected I probably get the answer: "Shoo Fly no live;" or, "Shoo Fly no lib;" or possibly, "He lib for chop, massa."

To "find" a thing is to search for it, though one may not find it at all; and a man will say: "I find him, find him, long time and never look him."

There is a great dearth of prepositions in the African languages; and in Kru language the word "for" serves all prepositional uses. It seldom uses more than one demonstrative, and the word "them" is forced to do this reluctant service.

I ask: "What for them man Weariness he no work to-day?" and perhaps get the answer: "He live for sick. He live close for die."

There are certain stock phrases that one hears all the time: "You sabey Englis mouf?" "I hear him small, small." "Massa, I no sabey them palaver." "Them man he make me trouble too much." "I go one time" ("one time" is "at once"), or "I go come one time."

Kruboys are not the only Africans who speak Kru English. It is spoken by thousands along the coast who have no knowledge of any other European language.

Even Frenchmen, and especially Germans, in their own colonies, sometimes have to learn Kru English in order to converse with their boat-boys. White men are often proud of speaking it well, and I have sometimes seen men standing at the head of the gangway and shouting down to the boys in a boat below, apparently for no other reason than to display their linguistic talent, as one might be vain of a knowledge of French or German. I have not used it as much as some ; for, in the Congo Français where I spent most of my time, very little English, good or bad, is spoken ; and in the interior one does not hear it at all. But I am very familiar with it. I have preached in it and have even prayed in it. This would have been impossible if any person had been present who could speak good English. Humour is peculiarly a social enjoyment. It takes at least two persons to enjoy a joke. Often in the native towns I have witnessed the most amusing incongruities without being in the least amused, until I thought of it afterwards, sometimes long afterwards, when talking with some one else who would appreciate the humour and see the incongruity with me. So, I say, I have preached in the Kru English, and, reverently, I believe—at least without any consciousness of incongruity ; but if an English-speaking person had entered the church I could scarcely have proceeded to the end of the sentence.

Shortly before leaving Africa I was visiting a coast town in a tribe whose own language I did not know. But they understood Kru English, and I preached to them in that dialect, on the parable of the Lost Sheep. It will not be fully appreciated without the African accent, tone, and gesture. I related the parable to them about as follows :

S'pose one man he have hunderd sheep and one sheep go loss for bush, what you think them man he go do ? Well he go lef' all them other sheep and he go find them

sheep he live for bush. He go find him, find him, and no tire till he look him. S'pose he find him four or three days and never look him, well, he no tire ; and s'pose he find him seven or six days and never look him he no tire ; ten or nine days and never look him, he no tire ; he go find him, find him, find him, all time till he look him. And s'pose he look him, well, he take them sheep on him shoulder, so — He carry him for house and give him plenty chop, and he be glad too much. Then he go call all him friends, plenty man, plenty wife, and small piccaninny, and he say to them : "Say, you sabey them sheep that done loss for bush ? Well, this day I look him. Then all people they make palaver and be happy too much. So, s'pose man go lef' all him sins and do God-fashion ; well, all them people, what live for top, they make fine palaver, and be happy too much."

There may be inaccuracies in this, but it is tolerably correct ; and I am sure that my African audience understood it. There is Kru English and Kru-er English, and Kru-est English. In the latter, "that" and "them" become "dat" and "dem." But even if many natives use this form they perfectly understand the white man when he uses the correct form ; and it is execrably bad taste to exaggerate either the pronunciation or the idiom, and to outdo the native himself in departing from the correct form. It also seems to me to be bad taste for white people to use Kru English when it is not necessary, as some do. And when a white woman deliberately adopts in her own household the word "chop," and other such words, she puts a strain upon my respect.

Once when I was living at Gaboon, a north-coast man from Accra called on me, with whom I conversed in Kru English. That evening I received a letter from him which I kept for a long time as one of my souvenirs of Gaboon. I venture to reproduce it from memory :

Right Reverend Father in God :

This day I done look gold toof what live for your mouf. All my life I never look so fine toof. Berra well. I like toof for my own mouf all same as them toof. I no like white toof again. S'pose you go buy me one toof all same as yours; s'pose you buy him for your country; berra well; I be fit for pay you cash and I be your fren all time. Please, Mister Milgan, do this for God's sake.

Your fren,

(Signed) JOSEPH ACCRA.

For trade and commerce between Africa and the civilized nations the Kruboy is at present more important than any other African, and is almost indispensable. For, owing to the heavy surf the open coast is nearly inaccessible for the landing of cargo and can only be worked by the most skillful and daring boatmen, and the Kruboy excels all Africans in these qualities. They received their first training from the slavers of early days, in whose service they learned both beach work and ship work. The slavers finding them useful allies and wishing to maintain friendly relations with them persuaded them to put a distinguishing mark upon themselves so that none of them might be taken and enslaved by mistake. This mark is a tattooed band, with an open pattern, running down the middle of the forehead and to the tip of the nose. The fashion, when once established, remained, and they are all tattooed in this way. The Kruboy also until late years hired with traders all along the coast to do beach work, that is, handle boats and cargo, sample rubber and oil, prepare eopra, and do the variety of work of a trading-house. He is willing to serve an apprenticeship almost for nothing, during which time, he says, he "live for learn sense." He is paid largely in goods.

On his return to his country (and he will not stay

away longer than a year) the Liberian government exacts a portion of his goods. A large part of the remainder goes to the elders of his tribe who have protected his wives in his absence. If he refuses this demand, which is usually exorbitant, or if he stays away too long from his country, the wives themselves are confiscated. Goods, however, that are made up into clothing are never demanded; and this accounts for a habit of the Kruboy which sometimes amazes ship-passengers. On his return as a deck-passenger after serving a year down the coast he turns tailor and employs all his time in making clothes, cutting them out and sewing them, on the deck. If there are many Krubois thus travelling the lower deck presents an aspect of fantastic activity. In late years they have not gone far down the coast except as ship-hands.

The Kru people are peculiarly inaccessible to Christian influence. This is in part owing to the fact that they are away so much of the time. The life that they live when thus separated from their people and the nature of their contact with white men are not conducive to their moral welfare. But, as a matter of fact, very little missionary work has been done among them. They are extremely superstitious. The surf, with which the Kruboy fights desperate battles for his life, is full of malignant spirits; and so of everything that opposes or hurts him. His soul leaves him when he sleeps, and often some witch catches it in a trap; whereupon he takes sick and soon dies. Sometimes the witch inflicts a fatal wound upon the soul; and sometimes he hangs the trap over the fire and the soul shrinks and dies, himself failing and dying at the same time. Occasionally, however, the wandering soul stays away of its own accord. A witch-doctor may catch it and put it back into him for a consideration. Sometimes when the soul of the sleeper would return in the

morning it finds its place taken by some malicious spirit which inflicts sickness. The witch-doctor must first expel this spirit before restoring the man's soul.

When a person of any importance dies the Kru custom is to kill a number of others to accompany him to the underworld. The underworld is somewhat like this, and the inhabitants there pass their time somewhat as we do here; much of it is therefore spent in talking palavers. Sometimes they even talk palavers which began in this life and were not settled or were decided unjustly. For this purpose they often need the testimony of persons still living, and such persons immediately die in order to go to the underworld and give testimony. This is a common explanation when a number of persons die about the same time.

I like the Kruboy so well and I admire his bravery so much that I am reluctant to admit his glaring deficiency of morals,—that he lies, steals, commits adultery, and kills his neighbours with a good-natured or perhaps stupid indifference to right and wrong scarcely paralleled even in Africa.

The treatment that the natives receive at the hands of the ship's officers is often the very opposite of brave. Many of these officers are pleasant gentlemen. Some of them will later be captains, and as a rule none but the best ever reach that position. The captains of the coast steamers are a fine class of men and delightful to travel with. I have never witnessed cruelty on their part towards the natives; though I have sometimes wondered that they did not interfere and restrain the angry passions of their officers. Yet, it must be added that the officers have not so much need of restraint when the captain is standing by.

Not to touch upon the doubtful propriety of swearing under any circumstances; no one but a fool will habitually swear at a Kruboy. For the Kruboy is as indiffer-

ent to a curse as to a blessing, and thus it reacts upon the man himself, exasperating him and putting him into such a rage as to threaten him with a fit of apoplexy or at least a *brain-storm*. The cursing of one or another of the officers at the Krubois is both loud and continuous, and if it should suddenly cease one might be justified in supposing that the ship had sprung a leak and was about to go to the bottom and the officers to certain death.

On the homeward voyage there are always, among the deck-passengers, a number of Accra or Lagos men who have been working on the south coast and are returning home with their pay, a large portion of which is in the shape of various goods. There is no harbour in either of these places and the steamer anchors far out, in rough water, the passengers going ashore in boats. Some officers when in charge of native passengers are careful of their baggage; but occasionally—and not seldom—it is flung down into the boat below without the slightest care and even with the apparent intention of causing as much breakage and other damage as possible. The officer casts an occasional glance towards the upper deck, quite sure that the white passengers are enjoying the joke. But he is mistaken: both the missionary and the trader are indignant. For they both know the native better than he does, and they also know that those goods were earned by the hard labour of at least a year, and perhaps three years, during which time he has not seen his home or his friends. And only those who know them intimately can understand this sacrifice; for the African can die of homesickness.

It is in accord with native etiquette that these men coming home should arrive very much dressed, in new clothes, starched linen and infinite jewelry. This dressing is done on the open deck and occupies sometimes the entire day before the arrival, to the delight of the white



THE DEBARKATION OF A DECK PASSENGER.

passengers, who also give much kindly and gratuitous advice, which the native takes in good part. But in spite of their assistance there is nearly always something a little "off" in the completed toilet. One individual, grandly dressed, had his new shoes on the wrong feet. They had been made on a very crooked last and the effect was more grotesque than one would suppose. He looked as if he expected to walk with his legs crossed. Well, we may enjoy all this with very kindly feelings towards the native. But the fun is all spoiled when the ship's officer perpetrates a practical joke apparently for our amusement. These passengers, men and women, in places where the sea is rough, are lowered into the boat by a chair, which is fastened to the end of a long rope suspended from a crane. The chair looks perfectly safe and comfortable as it sits on the deck. The native gets into it without hesitation. The rope is then drawn up by the crane till the chair is raised from the deck and goes swinging out over the bounding main. Its occupant, if it be a woman with a baby, for instance, screams with fright, and perhaps as the chair moves off flings her baby back on the deck, trusting to Providence for its landing; but the African baby leads a charmed life. Meanwhile the woman shuts her eyes and resigns herself to her fate. The chair is lowered to the boat below, and if the sea be rough and the boat heaving and tossing there is a very dangerous moment as the chair first comes in contact with it. The women are always lowered with care. But in lowering these much-dressed men—usually several at once—the officer in charge frequently makes it a point to "capsize" them, by letting the chair come down on the gunwale of the surf-boat, or on a thwart, so as to spill the occupants into the boat and into the six inches of very dirty water in the bottom of it, head first, or on their backs. Not to speak of the bruised and bleeding condi-

tion which sometimes results from this treatment, the native's toilet is deranged, his clothes perhaps torn, and he goes ashore in woeful dishabille. No one enjoys this joke but the officer himself.

At Lagos, on the homeward voyage, in these late years natives come on board with large basket-coops of chickens which they take to Sekondi and sell to the white men connected with the mines. In each of these baskets there are three or four dozen chickens, which will sell for three shillings each ; and surely this is an industry that ought to receive every encouragement. It is good for the natives and good for the miners. Yet, on certain steamers, such is the carelessness in loading them that sometimes not half the chickens reach Sekondi alive. There is not the least necessity for this large loss, nor for any loss. One day a trader of Fernando Po and I standing together watched a native, who had just come on board with his chickens, while he took out of one basket sixteen dead ones, exactly a third of the whole number, and he probably lost as many in landing them. We both thought that if the owner had been a white man in all probability not a chicken would have been lost.

The Kruboyes are divided into deck-boys and boat-boys. The more intelligent and experienced of the deck-boys run the steam-winchies and cranes, used in raising cargo from the hold, and in loading and stowing. Above the unceasing and relentless creaking of these three or four machines is heard the loud voice of one or several natives who stand at the open hatches and transmit orders from those in the hold below to those at the machines, the orders being always accompanied by appropriate gestures, which are also signals, so well understood that words would not be necessary for the common orders. Those at the hatches repeat from early morning till late at night

the following calls: "Heave a link—half a link—half a link—lower away. Lower a link—half a link—lower a link—heave away." Except between ports this goes on incessantly above the noise of the several winches. On one occasion when I had been feeling miserable for several days I said to the captain: "If ever I go mad I am sure I shall go on saying as long as I live: 'Half a link—half a link—heave away.'" The captain replied: "That is precisely the end to which I myself am looking forward." But when I am well I never weary of watching them at work.

A great variety of cargo is discharged, but more salt and gin than anything else. We take on rubber, ivory, mahogany, ebony, camwood, palm-oil and kernels. The palm-oil and kernels are used for the manufacture of soap and candles. The camwood, also called *barwood*, was more in demand before the use of analine dyes, but is still used in dyeing bandannas.

But the work of loading mahogany is of greatest interest to the passengers. At Gaboon many hundreds of these logs are always lying on the beach (or "in" the beach, as the disgusted captain frequently reports) awaiting shipment. African mahogany in these days is being shipped even to America where it is used for furniture. It is not nearly so valuable as the mahogany of Cuba and South America. But when it is figured with the "roe" it brings an enormous price. The roe of the mahogany is formed in the grain by one ring overlapping the other, making mottled ringlets of light and shade, sometimes very pronounced and exquisitely beautiful. Only those trees are cut which are close to the river, for the native has no mechanical means of transporting it and no mechanical aptitude to invent such means. They cut it into logs about twenty feet long, the average diameter being three feet. Such a log weighs about a ton and

sometimes much more. They slide the logs down into the river on improvised rollers. Then in one or several canoes they tow from two to eight logs at a time to the coast where they are sold to the white trader for about five dollars each, in goods. This is the average value at Gaboon. The trader puts the house-mark on them and then leaves them on the beach until they are shipped. At high tide most of them are afloat but they cannot drift away, as the waves are stronger than the current and drive them back on the beach. The German traders usually have their logs squared before shipping whereby much is saved on the freight to Europe. But others say that it costs more to have them squared by the native using an adz than to pay the extra freight and have them squared in the mills of Europe.

The Kruboyas are sent ashore from the ship to raft the logs, having first rolled them down the beach or dug them out of it. A spike with a ring attached, called a *dog*, is driven into an end of each log, through which a rope is passed. Then they are towed, ten or twelve at a time, to the steamer, usually anchored half a mile, or even a mile from the shore. The Kruboyas with surf-boats and paddles tow them well away from the shore and then they are taken by the steam launch, if the launch happens to be in order, which is once in a while. It is only in late years that the English steamers have carried launches. The first of these were evidently such as had been discarded by more favoured lines. They had ways past finding out. One of these, from its characteristic habit, a trader named the *Sudden Jerk*, following native custom. Another which was *sound* only in the whistle I named the *Piercing Scream*.

The work of unbeaching the logs and towing them to the steamer is very hard, but the danger and the excitement is in getting them loaded and stowed. They are

made fast at the ship's side. Several of the Kruboy's remain in the water. They first knock the "dog" out of the last log; then they pass a chain around it which is made fast to the steel cable of the deck-winch. A signal, always accompanied by a shout, is passed up to one on deck who transmits it to the man at the winch and the log is lifted out of the water. The Kruboy rises with it a part of the way, then leaps into the water and prepares the next log. This may not seem so very difficult to men who are as much at home in the water as on shore. But these logs weighing a ton each are all the while dashing against each other or against the ship's side with a deep boom that echoes through the ship. They are pitching and tossing and spinning, while the Kruboy tries to balance himself on top, keeps his eye on every log that is near, and at the same time does his work. But however it pitches and plunges he rides it as easily as a cowboy rides a pitching broncho. At first I looked on not only with interest, as always, but with a horrible fascination that I had never before experienced. All the passengers, from the upper deck, are watching the Kruboy lying across a log that heaves and rolls while he passes the chain beneath it, and at that moment another log is driven towards it with its full ton weight, the two colliding broadside. The passengers shout; if there is a lady aboard she screams. But somehow, when those logs meet, the Kruboy is not between them. He is underneath, and quite out of sight. At last he comes up somewhere, and shaking the water from his woolly head, looks up with a smile full of white teeth and says: "He nebber catch me." And this goes on all day long, whenever logs are loaded. Occasionally an arm is broken, more often a leg, and sometimes a life is lost.

When the log is raised to the height of the lower deck it is passed from one spar to another which is over the

hatch, and sweeps across the deck, all the Kruboyes at the same moment shouting for everybody to get out of the way ; but no time is lost in waiting for them to obey the order. They dodge skillfully, however ; for one is always dodging something in Africa, and there is seldom any accident. But terrible accidents have sometimes occurred down in the hold, during the hard work of stowing the logs so that every cubic foot of space may be occupied. I have also seen the steel cable break when a log weighing nearly two tons was suspended over the hatch. One thinks, of course, that all the Kruboyes down in that dark hold are directly under the falling log, which is never the case, and the volume of vocal noise which ascends immediately afterwards is a great relief to the blood-curdled feelings of the spectator, for it indicates that nobody is missing. But the fright extends beyond one's solicitude for the Kruboyes. For it looks as if that log would plunge right through the bottom of the ship. One will discover, however, that it fell upon a bed of several logs carefully placed there against such an accident.

But I have not yet told of the hardest and the bravest work of the Kruboy, a work for which few men anywhere in the world would have sufficient daring, namely, his landing of cargo through the surf in the season of the "calemma," or great wave of the southwest coast. Twice I have gone far south of Gaboon when the sea was at the worst. Once I went as far as Benguela, in Angola, and again I visited the Congo. On the latter journey I was nearly five weeks on shipboard.

The boat-boys are divided into crews according to the number of surf-boats in use. In a good sea a crew usually consists of seven men, six of whom use paddles, while the seventh, the headman, stands erect in the stern of the boat and steers with an oar attached to the stern. In a rough sea fewer boats are lowered and the crew is

increased to as many as thirteen men. However long the day's work or hard the battle with the sea, they sing to the last stroke, keeping time with their paddles to one of their strange, wild boat-songs. Sometimes the song has only rhythm and no melody, being a monotonous repetition of several notes: "So sah, so sooh, so sah, so sooh, so sah, so sooh, ad—zh! So sah, so sooh," etc. The man who sings at his work will do more work in a given time and do it better. Not that the African is always a great worker. He is seldom that; but he does more work singing than he would do not singing. And he sings because, however wronged and oppressed, there is a freedom within him which the white man can never take away; a lightness of heart, a buoyancy of spirit intractable to tyranny.

West Africa is notorious in all the world for its paucity of harbours, and its heavy surf, which at certain seasons rages like a battle, the roar of it like many voices defying the white man that would approach its shores. The surf at one place where we called was so bad that we were seven days discharging one day's cargo. The sea rolled in with a tremendous swell—the *calemma*—like a wall of water that looked three stories high, which, as it approached the land, burst into a succession of breakers that raced towards the shore, and striking with the boom of cannon, tossed the white surf high into the air. One always feels, in going through it, that he is fighting a personal foe; there is even something human in the sound of it. The Kruboy says it is full of spirits. Savage spirits, they must be, and drunken, which leap and tumble and shout in mad carousal.

At each place the first venture in the surf-boats was watched eagerly from the ship. Three or four boats set out together with a light cargo. Near the surf they stop, landing one at a time, and waiting for the right moment.

They wait perhaps as long as half an hour. Then, in the first boat, at the word of the headman, they throw their weight on the paddles and pull for their lives, not looking to either side, nor speaking a word. Now they are in the breakers, borne forward upon the racing waves with violent speed, a roaring monster before them and another more ferocious one pursuing. At this moment the safety of all depends upon the skill of the headman in keeping the boat placed right to the wave. And in any case, if the boat, upon reaching the beach, strike the ground at a moment when the water has receded, the breaker following will be upon it before they can drag it up the beach, and catching it up will perhaps stand it straight on end, and hurl it backward upon the beach; or, if it be not straight to the wave, it will be whirled about and flung up the beach, rolling over and over, with all its freight of boxes and barrels, the boys escaping I know not how—but not always escaping.

One day when the beach seemed much better than usual, the captain and the ship's surgeon ventured ashore. The purpose of the captain was probably to visit the shippers with the object of drumming up trade, as captains are obliged to do on the coast. For this purpose he makes a very friendly call on each trader, listens to his graphophone, and even praises it. He was brave to risk the surf, but he took the doctor. The captain afterwards narrated the adventure of their landing to a small but enthusiastic audience. He said that after waiting outside the surf half an hour, the headman suddenly gave the order, and in a moment they were in the breakers, riding on the top of one of them, and speeding towards the shore at the rate of "seventy miles an hour," which calculation was merely his sensation expressed in terms of linear measure. The captain was in the bow of the boat well braced and cushioned. But when the boat struck

the beach with the force of a railway collision, the doctor was thrown violently over two thwarts into the captain's bosom, whom he clasped about the neck with a steel-like grip. The next moment another breaker picked the boat up and hurled it upon the beach, throwing both captain and doctor to a perfectly safe distance where they sprawled upon the sand. The doctor, still hugging the captain's neck, and very much frightened, exclaimed: "O Captain, dear Captain, is there anybody killed but you and me?"

But now it is evening, at the close of a bad day. No white man has ventured ashore these ten days. But the Kruboy's have gone, and there on the beach is a boat making a last attempt to come off. The sea has been getting worse all day, and it is now like a boiling caldron. They have been there for hours, and have tried again and again to get off, but have failed, though they have no cargo, and they are the best crew and have the best headman of all. Several times they have been thrown back on the beach, and once the boat was capsized when nearly through the breakers; now they are making a last effort.

They stand around the boat, their weight against it, alert, and waiting in eager attention for the word of command. A shout from the headman, and in a moment they have pushed the big boat out into the water, have leaped into it, grasped the paddles, and are pulling like mad. The first breaker strikes the boat a blow that staggers it: the spirits must have been very angry. They are through it; but the boat is nearly half full of water and is not straight. The headman throws himself upon the oar, but alas! with such force that the becket attaching it to the stern is wrenched off. They are now at the mercy of the next breaker, a fearful one, which sweeps them ashore with violence, whirling the boat

round, and then rolling it over and over upon the beach. As the water recedes we see them lying scattered at random upon the sand. They get up slowly as if half dazed ; and one of them lies unconscious as the next wave washes over him, matting his hair with the wet sand. And there lies the brave headman badly bruised, the flesh torn from his leg, exposing the bone from the knee down. But one poor boy has fought his last fight with the wild sea. Many fights he has won, but the spirits have beaten him this time. "Oh, boys," he says, "I'm hurt. I can't get up. I can't even move. I'm afraid my back is broken."

So it was indeed : his back was broken. Late in the night he died, the other boys sobbing like children as they stood around him. Next day they buried him ; and that evening they got off to the ship. As they approached, the wind wafted to us the sound of a native dirge, weird and plaintive, which they were chanting for their dead brother.

I feel bound to tell the sequel of this incident. The next day the sea was so bad that it seemed useless and foolish to attempt to land. The boys presented themselves in a body before a certain one of the officers and said : "Mastah, them sea he be bad too much. We no be fit for land cargo. S'pose we try, we go loss all cargo, and plenty man's life. So please excuse to-day, Mastah ; for we think to-morrow go be fine."

The answer they received was a volley of profanity and curses. "Just because one of them was killed they all turn cowards," said one. "Always thinking of themselves !" said another. With many such shrewd observations, and sundry moral exhortations to bravery, the boats were lowered and they were ordered into them.

But on these same steamers there are brave men and kind-hearted. On this particular morning the purser

boldly protested. "If they are cowards," said he, "what are we? For notwithstanding the demands of business, not one of us has ventured ashore for many days. I'm no coward myself," he continued, "but I confess that those boys put my bravery to shame. They are the bravest boys in the world. Neither do I believe that they are bound to risk their lives in such a sea as this for a shilling a day."

While he was speaking some one shouted: "There goes the first boat."

We ran to the side just in time to see the boat borne down by the first breaker, whirled around and capsized, the boys struggling for their lives, not only with a furious sea, but with heavy boxes and casks and the boat itself, all tossed to and fro in the surging waters. They escaped without serious injury; but no white man could have escaped. About the same time, a few miles up the coast, a steamer had one of its strong surf-boats flung upon the beach with such violence that it was broken in two across the middle. Another steamer had two boys killed.

One day our boys went ashore early in the morning, leaving the ship at half-past five. They were expecting to make the first trip before breakfast, as usual, and therefore had nothing to eat before starting. They had landed the cargo safely at the trading-house; but the sea was so bad that they could not get off to the ship all that day. They made several unsuccessful attempts, and it was almost night when at last they succeeded. Meanwhile, the swell had become so heavy that we had steamed far out for safety, and were anchored seven miles from the shore. The boys reached the ship after dark, and we then learned that the white trader ashore had given them nothing to eat; although the ship would have repaid him. Those boys had battled with the sea weak with hunger, not having had a taste of food all that day. It is only fair to

say that on the steamers they are well fed. There are but very few English traders who would do as that man did ; though there are many such men of other nationalities.

Only a short time afterwards, one evening at the table, an officer who had been ashore told us a story that was intended to prove the cruelty of the native. A white trader, he said, had caught a young elephant. He went away on a journey to the bush, leaving the care of it to his native workmen. Upon his return, after several months, he found the elephant in very poor health ; and a few weeks later it died. There was no doubt that the natives had neglected to feed it in his absence, and this was the cause of its death. Horrible cruelty of the beastly native ! Pungent remarks, appropriate to the occasion, were contributed all around the table. For myself—I was thinking of those starved and tired boys battling with a raging sea. But I said not a word. What would be the use ?

We need not be sentimental about the native's wrongs. Though a victim, he is not necessarily innocent. He would do unto others as others do unto him ; and his life is perhaps not rendered more miserable by the white man than it was before. But, then, they are *savages* and we are supposed to be civilized ; and the most wretched excuse that the white man can give for his cruelty is that he is only imitating the natives themselves. The white man is always calling the native a devil, and always expecting him to act like an angel, while he himself, so far from being angelic, sets an infernal example.

The truth is that the white man in the tropics is out of his element as much as the diver who works in the deep sea. The atmosphere in which he was produced and in which he developed—the mental, moral, social and physical conditions—are also necessary to his moral and

physical maintenance. The climate weakens and depresses him, while at the same time he is not sustained by domestic cheer and the society of equals to which he has been accustomed. He is invariably nervous and as a consequence impatient, while at the same time the circumstances that confront him in the discharge of his daily duties are such as would try the temper of a saint. If he remain long in a climate so unnatural to him and in a strange and uncivilized society the likelihood is that there will be an imperceptible and unconscious lowering of moral standards and accommodation to the standards of the society around him. Cruelty which at first shocked him gradually ceases to shock and at length he becomes indifferent, or perhaps himself capable of barbarous deeds from which he would at first have recoiled with horror.

For the men of whom I have been speaking are not inferior to the average man at home. Your virtues, and the graces of mind and character upon which you pride yourself—your strength and composure, your patience and devotion to duty, your honesty, your justice, your purity—all these belong not only to yourself but to the society which has produced you and of which you are a part. The moral standards which it has erected in the course of its social evolution, the safety with which it has surrounded you, the comforts which this safety has made procurable, the disapprobation by which it punishes any infraction of its laws—to these, not to yourself alone, you owe your moral attainments. None but the highest and most fixed moral standards will bear transportation to a tropical climate and tropical society. Until this fact is clearly recognized the relation of civilization to the uncivilized tropics is likely to be productive of misery and shame. If I did not hate sensationalism I could easily fill this chapter with a record of the misdeeds and barbarities in Africa of men, many of whom belonged to

respectable families and to good society and were well-behaved at home.

Neither does the white man become acclimated in the tropics—no more than the diver in the deep sea. The longer he remains, his physical and moral resources become the more exhausted. Let us keep these facts in mind in judging those of whom we have spoken, and those of whom we have yet to speak in the next chapter.

X

WHITE AND BLACK

"Our only program, I am anxious to repeat, is the work of moral and material regeneration."—*King Leopold II.*

"The work of civilization, as you call it, is an enormous and continual butchery."—*M. Lorand, in the Belgian Parliament.*

ST. PAUL DE LOANDA, in the Portuguese colony of Angola, is the only place on the entire west coast of Africa that looks like a real city. It is several centuries old, and from the sea the appearance is not unlike the Mediterranean cities of North Africa. But as soon as one goes ashore this illusion is dissolved. What makes it unlike any other settlement on the west coast is chiefly its roofs of red tile instead of corrugated iron, with its superheated appearance, that is used in all places recently built. The city is also lighted by oil lamps. The harbour being one of the best, I went ashore with the captain and after a walk about the town we played a few games of billiards with the British consul. I had then been several years on the coast and this seemed like a brief return to civilization. The night coming on brought with it more civilization. A native band played, by ear, two or three tunes, and played them well—considering. It is said that they have played those same tunes since the band was organized, and no one now living remembers when that was.

A mouldering church, *Our Lady of Salvation*, which stands on the beach, is two and a half centuries old, and is a work of art, containing interesting and historical

scenes in blue and white tiles. From this place in the dark age of slavery thousands of slaves were shipped across the Atlantic: and the Roman Catholic bishop sat on the wharf and baptized them, not individually, but in shiploads. Surely *Our Lady of Salvation* might have been called *Our Lady of Sorrows*.

There were very few passengers on board, but there were a number of dogs. The captain had a weakness for dogs. The breed of the dog made no difference. Whether they were useful or useless, whether sound and healthy or dreadfully diseased and scarcely able to walk, he loved them all without partiality or discrimination. Men further up the coast who had European dogs that were particularly mangy or threatened with rabies would give them into the captain's care and he would take them for a health-change down the coast. At one time there were nine dogs living on board. He never seemed to realize that in this, as in all other things, tastes differ; and that a certain dog, an English mastiff, as ugly as the rest of its kind, might not be entirely welcome to share my soup at the table just because it was welcome to his.

There were two fox-terriers tied together with five or six feet of small rope between them. As their health improved these two terriers became animated beyond all control. They amused themselves by pulling down cages full of parrots for the delight of hearing them remonstrate in a prolonged concert of harsh squawking. But their chief exercise was straight running at breakneck speed from one end of the promenade deck to the other, with six feet of rope stretched taut between them, to the terror of the passengers, who were so few in number that they were regarded as a negligible quantity. There was a lady on board with whom I occasionally walked until the terriers made it impossible to do so without sacrificing either comfort or gallantry. At the sight of them coming to-

wards her, like a whirlwind sweeping down the deck and the rope threatening to trip her up, the lady's energy all went to her hands instead of her feet ; for she invariably lost her presence of mind and stood still wringing her hands instead of hastily retreating into some safe corner. But I could not understand why she should think that I also ought to lose my presence of mind and stand still and be tripped when I had youth and fleetness of limb to accomplish an escape.

We were three days at Benguela during which we witnessed the Mardi Gras celebration. Men, women, and children filled the streets with merrymaking and presented a spectacle of fantastic colours, grotesque costumes, and uncouth masks, such as I had never before seen. Our errand to Benguela was the delivery of a large consignment of supplies for the newly projected railway which, it is expected, shall ultimately extend far inland to the region of Lake Tanganyika, thus connecting with the traffic of the east coast. The bit of this railway already built represents what Portugal has done towards the development of Africa in the course of several centuries.

The trading-houses of Benguela are surrounded by walled enclosures, or compounds, in former days used for the confinement of slaves awaiting shipment. This is not like the bush country further north, but is more open and its main slave-trail extends a thousand miles into the interior. This is the end of the trail that Livingstone followed in his first tragic journey across Africa.

But that which ought to be fully known to the civilized world is that slavery still exists in the whole territory of Angola and in the adjoining Portuguese islands, and with all its attendant horrors. Most of the house-servants and factory-servants of Benguela are slaves purchased with money and frequently resold. Young women are sold and resold by white men to white men as mistresses. Any

white man in Benguela will tell one that the average price is twenty pounds. She may be resold from time to time at a decreasing price. The work on the large plantations is done by slaves who serve under the lash, and it is estimated that half the population of Angola are in slavery ; some would say more than this. This includes domestic as well as foreign slavery. But the traffic by the Portuguese has made domestic slavery more severe. They were also being shipped from Benguela at that time, to the islands of San Thomé and Príncipe, at the rate of three or four thousand a year, and in all probability the number has since increased. I have visited Príncipe, and I know something of the actual conditions in that island.

The ways of Portugal have not changed in these four centuries of her African history. In the year 1509 a Portuguese officer landing in South Africa became embroiled with the Hottentots and he and twenty of his men were killed. Three years afterwards a Portuguese captain landed a cannon loaded with grapeshot as a pretended present to the Hottentots. Men, women and children gathered around in wonder. While they were admiring it the Portuguese captain fired it off and looked on with delight as the wretched people fell in heaps. And Portugal has not changed. The ally of England from time immemorial, and possessing a remarkable collection of souvenirs in the form of anti-slavery treaties, some of them recent and one of them as late as 1885, she still prosecutes her slave-trade with vigour, albeit with circumspection to her reputation as well as her profit.

The Bailundu rebellion, in the interior of Angola, in 1902, was still an occasional topic of conversation. The Portuguese claimed that it was caused by the few American missionaries of that interior district—as if their own rapacity and lust were not sufficient explanation. If that

be true, and if it be true that the missionaries are responsible for all similar wars from Angola to China, as their detractors allege, it is surely evident that the missionary influence is not to be derided after all, but is a tremendous force to be reckoned with in national economy. The Bailundu rebellion was a complete failure. The unorganized native forces were unable to stand before an army disciplined by white officers, and it soon developed into a wholesale massacre of natives.

Shortly afterwards a missionary from that part spent a day with me at Gaboon and recounted many incidents of the war. Portuguese planters exacted enormous indemnity which reduced many to slavery. Such incidents as the following occurred: A certain man, in order to pay his portion of the indemnity exacted by a certain planter, at last was compelled to sell his two children as slaves. He returned to his village with desolate heart and tearless eyes, went into his house, came out again, and walked around it, went into it again and came out with his sword, uttered one heart-broken cry, and plunging the sword into his breast, killed himself.

As a consequence of the war, however, the Angola secret became known and there was considerable feeling aroused among the better class in Portugal. To their righteous remonstrance the government responded by abolishing the name of slavery and prosecuting the traffic as vigorously as ever under an ingenious and particularly diabolical form of law called "labour contract." The only difference to the native is that while formerly his servitude was a direct violation of law it is now perfectly legal; but he is still seized and transported and labours under the lash until he dies.

In 1905, Mr. Henry W. Nevins went to Angola for the express purpose of investigating the reported slavery. Mr. Nevins upon a careful and intelligent investigation

found the conditions such as I have stated, and he gave an accurate report in a series of articles in *Harper's Magazine*.

The slave-merchant, or "labour-merchant," as we must now call him, procures his labourers in the interior, sometimes six hundred or eight hundred miles from the coast. He pays for them in rifles and other goods. The price that he offers, while very small, considering the value of a slave to a planter, is yet sufficient to excite the cupidity of a class of natives beyond the possibility of control. They first sell their domestic slaves to the white men, then they sell anybody whom they can get into their power. In the old slave days it was not safe for three men to go together to the slave-market lest two of them should combine to sell the third, and such is always the brutalizing effect of the slave-trade on many of the natives. Those slaves that are not used on the plantations of Angola are marched in caravans to the coast. They march in shackles, or chained together, and under an armed guard: Many die on the way, sometimes half the caravan.

Arriving at the coast, they are sold, or contracted, to an employer, usually a planter of San Thomé or Principe, at a large advance on the interior price. They are then brought by the employer before a magistrate who draws up a contract in proper legal form. It makes not the slightest difference what the native answers to the questions asked him or whether he answers at all, a contract is drawn up in which he declares that he has come of his own free will to contract for his services at so much labour for so much pay, and that the contract holds good for five years. The contractor on his part agrees to pay a certain monthly wage and to provide food and clothing. The native is given a copy of the contract and a little tin cylinder in which to keep it, the sign and declaration of his freedom and protection by law. But hypocrisy can

go even further ; for these Portuguese, merchants and government officials, actually pose as *Philanthropists*. "See," they say, "what we have done for these men and women. They were all slaves to black men, and we have redeemed them." Philanthropy is usually unlucrative, but the genius of the Portuguese has made it pay.

Despite the expiration of the contract at the end of five years and the promise of a free passage home, the native thus transported is never known to return. Henceforth he is one of a long line of men and women that labour on the cocoa fields all the day long, some of the women carrying babies on their backs—that labour in stolid silence under the lash or the prod of a sharpened stick from early morning till the sound of the evening bell. That they become debased and immoral is only what we should expect ; and therefore the traffic in men's bodies is also a traffic in men's souls. So they live and toil, each day like all the others until the last short journey, when, as Mr. Nevinson describes, "their dead bodies are lashed to poles to be carried out and flung away in the forest."

But is there no relief to the dark picture ? No compensation ? Yes, there is some compensation. We get cheaper cocoa and plenty of chocolate.

The people of the United States have a deep and practical interest in the question of the principles that ought to regulate the relations of the governing and the governed in those tropical countries that are under the dominion of the various civilized powers. Having come into possession of the Philippine Islands, with their vast and undeveloped resources, the problem is their own and waits for solution. Upon the people of the United States, because of the serious and responsible situation with which they are confronted, may devolve the task of devising and administering a form of government in accord with the higher modern standard of English-speaking people in re-

gard to the national duty involved in the relation of a civilized power to a subject and savage people. No graver problem is likely to arise in the course of the entire century of which we are still on the threshold. And the United States is the better prepared for her task by the fact that she is uncontrolled by precedent and unbiased by tradition.

The Portuguese theory of tropical control is evident enough. The acquired possession is an estate to be worked for the benefit of those in control, whose right is simply "might." Its native inhabitants, who have the moral right to its possession, are counted among the various resources of the acquired property, and may be exploited accordingly. The practical sequences of this theory are slavery and plunder.

The theory that surrounds the colony with high tariffs for the exclusive benefit of the governing power and which concedes foreign monopolies to the disregard of native interests, is not essentially different from that of Portugal. This latter is the theory that is being worked out in the Congo Français as a result of the example and influence of the Belgian trusts, and the intrigues of King Leopold's agents in France. We believe that it cannot be permanent as a form of French colonial government because of the humane and generous instincts of the French people. And it is certain that such a policy could not long endure in any territory under the control of the United States. For a policy in order to be permanent must have the support of the moral sentiment of the nation, and such a policy traverses our basal doctrine of the native equality of men.

But there is in the United States a tendency to the other extreme, namely, to insist upon the native right of self-government, holding that the sum of our duty is to set up a civilized form of government and then withdraw from

control, leaving the native nation to maintain it. The advocates of such a policy are guilty of a serious oversight in forgetting that "democracy is not simply a form of government, but a state of human evolution." The native form of government cannot advance far beyond the social life of the people, for they are sustained by the same moral forces. As a matter of fact there is not in the world a single example of a successful native government of a tropical country. Failures are conspicuous on both sides of the Atlantic; for instance, Hayti in the West Indies and Liberia in Africa. The tropical governments of Central and South America are not in any sense native governments, but are administered by a permanently resident foreign community, in their own interest, whose moral standards tend to lower more and more as they mingle with the native populations. A form of native government that would compare with those of civilized nations is by no means possible until the moral forces that have contributed to the highest civilization are operative in their social life.

It is evident that the tropical nations if left to themselves will not develop the resources of their country. But it is equally evident that the civilized world will not, and ought not, to leave these resources undeveloped. For civilization depends upon the tropics for many trade products, including india-rubber, and the dependence increases at such a rate that it is predicted that the main lines of commerce in the future will run north and south instead of east and west, and the prediction is not fanciful.

It would seem therefore that the development of the resources of the tropics will be by the native under the supervision of the white man. The ideal government will be based upon the clear recognition of mutual need and mutual benefit; and the principle that will mould the form of government and be constantly operative in

its administration will be the duty of the civilized nation to bring to the uncivilized its best benefits, to their mutual advantage. The interest of the native himself will be always the first consideration; for he has the first right to the resources of his country and to the reward of his labour; and the interest of the foreign nation second, in the greater sources of supply and the enlarged market for her merchandise.

To give actuality and force to such a government three things will be required in its administration, as suggested by Mr. Benjamin Kidd in his book, "The Control of the Tropics": first, its officers must be only those who represent the highest moral ideals of civilization; second, the most intimate contact must be maintained with the home government; third, the policy and its administration must be constantly subject to the severe scrutiny of public opinion. Public apathy, inconsiderate confidence in our agents in the tropics—the conceit that they cannot go far wrong because they are Americans, will lead to shame and degradation.

Such a moral motive and the conscientious discharge of the duty involved constitute the white man's right, and his *only* right, to occupy the black man's country.

It was with Captain Button of the *Volta* that I went up the Congo to Boma and Matadi. I owe to several of the captains, and to Captain Harrison in particular, a debt of gratitude for many kindnesses; but I travelled most with Captain Button and from no other did I receive so many kind, and often costly favours. More than once, upon finding me in very bad health when his ship called at Gaboon, he fairly forced me to go for a health-change; and on the occasion of my visit to the Congo I was in such a miserable condition of health that a single attack of fever would probably have been my last, when Captain Button swooped down upon me and carried me off.

I had been troubled with abscesses, common enough on the coast, and when I went aboard I had a very severe one on my left forearm. One night, near the Congo, when I was suffering with the pain and had been awake several nights, the captain had a stretcher placed on deck for me and advised that I lay my arm in a basin of warm water which was placed beside me. He then told the ship's surgeon to examine my arm and see whether it ought not to be lanced. But he told him not to mention the matter of lancing it to me. I was weak and nervous with loss of sleep and he wished to save me the additional pain of thinking about the lancing of it and consenting to it. The doctor examined the arm and then having consulted with the captain went below and got his lance. When he returned the captain was sitting beside me ready to assist. The doctor a second time bent over the arm as it was extended over the basin. Then I saw the gleam of a knife which was instantly plunged into my arm. Ten minutes of agony during which the captain poured on warm water,—and then *rest*, the first I had had for many days, and a few minutes later I was asleep. That was the last of the abscesses and from that time I gained perceptibly each day.

At Boma, the capital of the Congo Free State, sixty miles from the mouth of the river, we lay in against the bank and moored the ship to the shore. Close beside us was a sight upon which I gazed with gruesome interest, the wreck of the steamship *Matadi*. My first voyage to Africa was on the *Matadi*. I think it was on her next voyage that she was wrecked. Like all the ships of her class she was called a palm-oil tub. The steamers of the present service are incomparably better. The *Matadi* was blown up by a fearful explosion of gunpowder that had been carelessly stored. All the crew except one were drowned. There were also on board two American mis-

sionaries, Mr. and Mrs. Harvey, who went down with the ship. They were in their cabin when the explosion occurred. The door jammed and could never afterwards be opened, so that the bodies remain there to this day. A smoke-stack protruding out of the water, a part of a poop-deck, overgrown with grass, and an enormous side-piece flung upon the shore—such were the innuendo of the scene.

Boma is built on the side of a long, sloping hill. Its buildings, many of them made of sheets of corrugated iron, are scattered in disorder. Behind them on higher ground is the attractive, pale-coloured residence of the governor. There is a good road and several avenues of palms and a number of flower-gardens surrounding the residences. A well-ordered hospital, a state school, a palace of justice, a prison for white men, a fort and barracks are the more conspicuous buildings. Three street-lamps and a native band that plays twice a week, probably by ear, make life delightful and bring the city up to date. Boma looks well from the river—as looks go in Africa. But when one remembers that for more than twenty years it has been the capital of the Congo Free State, a territory four times the size of Germany, from which also vast wealth has been drawn and that Belgium's civilizing agencies have been concentrated here, one is not greatly impressed. At least it does not compare with the other capitals of West Africa, the French Libreville, the German Dualla or the English Calabar.

In the hospital at Boma one may see cases of the strange "sleeping sickness," that awful scourge that has in late years passed across Africa from the east to the west decimating the population and often in the farther east destroying entire towns. Until very recently there has been no recovery. The patient sleeps without waking, except for food—sleeps and wastes away for eight or

ten months until he dies. The germ is now supposed to be carried by the tsetse fly.

I of course witnessed no Belgian atrocities at Boma, and it would surely have been a matter of amazement if I had. But still more amazing is the report of certain casual travellers, who had no more opportunity than myself for direct observation, to the effect that there are no atrocities, because they did not witness them. If I had gone to King Leopold's representative, the governor at Boma, and had told him, in the course of a neighbourly conversation, that I had heard about the Belgian atrocities and had come to witness them that I might exploit them to the horrified nations, and then had asked him to accommodate my purpose by having at least a few atrocities performed in the front yard, including the different varieties of murder, mutilation and torture, it would have been parallel to the methods pursued by certain persons, who actually heralded their arrival and their purpose all along the way, notified Leopold's agents in particular, perfected their investigations by asking questions of these same agents, and then proclaimed that these cruel reports of atrocities and atrocities represent an unparalleled conspiracy on the part of several hundred men from half a score of nations, who having lived many long years in the Congo have become prejudiced and have accumulated a number of personal grievancees against the Belgian officials and are now seeking by the invention of innumerable charges of unheard-of crimes to ruin the reputation of Good King Leopold and deprive him of his rights. The administration of the Congo government is not a melodrama ; it is anything but that. Leopold's atrocities are not placed on free exhibition at Boma for the entertainment of travellers, some of whom are immorally unconcerned in regard to the real suffering of the natives. They are performed only for money and plenty of it.

The motive is money and the argument is that they pay. Though I was only a traveller, and not a resident, in the Congo Free State, yet I can speak with some authority on the question of the Belgian régime; for I lived several years in the adjoining territory, the Congo Francais, a large part of which was farmed out in concessions to Belgian companies, whose policy and methods were precisely those of the Congo Free State. Such a system, however, is contrary to the spirit of the French, and one cannot think that it will long endure.

Consider for a moment the various sources of the evidence against Leopold and his agents. There are about two hundred Protestant missionaries in the Congo Free State, representing the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Germany, Norway, Sweden and Denmark. These missionaries, men and women, have lived for years in the Congo, many of them twenty, and even twenty-five years, and are scattered over the entire territory. They speak the language of the people and therefore have the most intimate knowledge of conditions. Their motive is only the good of the native, and every influence that makes for the betterment of the native's condition contributes to their success. That they should not know the truth in regard to the alleged atrocities of the Belgians is impossible; that they should unite to falsify the truth is unthinkable. But their testimony is all of one kind, and against Belgium, and constitutes probably the most terrible indictment of a civilized government in the last two thousand years, if not in the history of the world.

But there are other witnesses besides missionaries. In 1903 the British government, in response to the entreaty and remonstrance of missionaries and traders and English Chambers of Commerce, appointed Mr. Roger Casement, British Consul to the Congo, to make a thorough investigation of conditions in the Congo Free State. Mr. Case-

ment, whom I had the pleasure of meeting at Matadi, was peculiarly fitted for the task assigned to him. He had spent twelve years in the consular service in Africa. He had the unqualified confidence of the British government and was held in the highest esteem and admiration by all classes of men in the Congo. Mr. Poultney Bigelow says of him: "Roger Casement is the sort of man depicted in Jules Verne's novels, the man who is everlastingly exploring and extricating himself from every imaginable difficulty by superhuman tact, wit and strength."

Mr. Casement's report of the results of his investigation is a revealing document. It confirms the worst charges that had been made. It abounds in such incidents as the following: "This man himself, when I visited him in Boma goal, in March, 1901, said that more than a hundred women and children had died of starvation at his hands, but that the responsibility was due to his superior's orders and neglect."

But even Belgians have been, and are to-day, among those who denounce the Belgian king. For instance, a Belgian agent, named Lecroix, confessed that he had been instructed by his chief to massacre all the natives of a certain village, including women and children, for not bringing in enough rubber. He also told how that on one occasion his chief had put sixty women in chains, all but five of whom died of starvation.

At last the feeling became so strong in Europe that in September, 1904, King Leopold appointed a Commission of Inquiry consisting of three persons, two of whom were his own subjects; the third was an eminent Swiss jurist. This was somewhat like King Leopold investigating himself. But the Commission seems to have listened impartially to the testimony. With the eyes of Europe upon them they proceeded to the Congo and spent four and a half months in taking the sworn testimony of "hundreds

of witnesses." The contrast between what the Commission *expected* to find, and what they actually found, may be best expressed in the words that M. Janssens, president of the Commission, is reported to have spoken publicly before leaving Boma: "I came here with a feeling of confidence, expecting to find everything in order. I did not think I was about to come into contact with such putridity as I have found."

In general the report of King Leopold's Commission confirms all the charges, including the very worst, that had ever been made against the Congo government.

To such an extent is this true that those who are working against the continuance of King Leopold's rule in the Congo would be willing to base their appeal on the report of the Commission alone. It is a lengthy and exhaustive document, but a few brief extracts will convey a fair idea of the whole; for instance the following:

"In the majority of cases the native must go one or two days' march every fortnight, until he arrives at that part of the forest where the rubber vines can be met with in a certain degree of abundance. There the collector passes a number of days in a miserable existence. He has to build himself an improvised shelter which obviously cannot replace his hut. He has not the food to which he is accustomed. He is deprived of his wife, exposed to the inclemencies of the weather and the attacks of wild beasts. When once he has collected the rubber he must bring it to the State station, or to that of the Company, and only then can he return to his village, where he can sojourn for barely more than two or three days, because the next demand is upon him.

"They brought before the Commission a multitude of native witnesses, who revealed a great number of crimes and excesses alleged to have been committed by the sentries. . . . The truth of the charges is borne out by

a mass of evidence and official reports. . . . The agents examined by the Commission did not even attempt to refute them.

“According to the witnesses, these auxiliaries convert themselves into despots, demanding women and food, not only for themselves, but for a retinue of parasites which a love of rapine causes to become associated with them. They kill without pity all those who attempt to resist.

“If we accept Stanley’s figures it is incontestable that a large part of the population must have disappeared ; for, from Stanley Pool to Nouvelle Anvers, the banks of the river are almost deserted.”

Thus much from the report of King Leopold’s Commission. What is called the “sentry system” is the most atrocious factor in this policy. As a matter of course coercion must be used in the enforcement of a continuous labour-tax. An army of thirty thousand native soldiers is maintained for the suppression and exploitation of the people, who are unarmed and defenseless. Thus can a king do when he becomes a trader. This army is raised by conscription, and is practically an army of slaves. The conscripts are removed from their own people and are made to serve among strangers. Despair is never a sanctifying grace ; and these desperate men are armed and compelled to a life of continual cruelty and shocking crime, whereby they are in course of time transformed into foulest fiends. To them is committed the oversight of those who collect rubber and the punishment of those who come short. This is the “sentry system.”

When I visited Boma and Matadi the commonest subject of conversation, both by traders and missionaries, was the Belgian atrocities.

Matadi is one hundred and ten miles from the sea. Between Boma and Matadi, at a bend in the river, there is a fearful whirlpool called the Devil’s Caldron, at least

it is "fearful" in the wet season when the river is highest and the current swiftest. This vortex is the shape of a funnel. As we left it on our right and passed across the outer rim, the big ocean steamer listed to starboard. A short time before, a lighter loaded with cargo and manned by Kruboyes had been drawn into it. Several persons watched it as it swept around in a narrowing circle until at last near the centre it suddenly took a header and plunged into the abyss with its human freight.

Matadi is built on the side of a perpendicular rock, which Richard Harding Davis says is "not so large as Gibraltar, nor so high as the Flatiron Building, but it is a little more steep than either. Three narrow streets lead to its top. They are of flat stones, with cement gutters. The stones radiate the heat of stove-lids. They are worn to a mirror-like smoothness, and from their surface the sun strikes between your eyes, at the pit of your stomach, and blisters the soles of your mosquito boots."

Matadi is not much more than a railroad terminus. Between the Lower and Upper Congo, that is, between Matadi and Leopoldville, on Stanley Pool, the river is not navigable, owing to the rapids. A railroad two hundred and fifty miles long unites these two places. It was built at a tremendous cost both of money and of life. Out of four hundred Chinese imported at one time, for work on the railroad, two hundred and fifty died within three years. Kruboyes and others were brought from the north and engaged to work according to a certain definite contract; but in most cases the contract was disregarded and they were practically enslaved, working until they died. The railroad, the *Chemin de Fer du Congo*, is exceedingly useful and has also proved a paying investment. The fare from Matadi to Leopoldville, two hundred and fifty miles, was fifty dollars, when I was at Matadi, that is,

twenty cents a mile. But I imagine that those who had made the journey on foot over that rough country, did not begrudge the exorbitant fare.

Henry M. Stanley, starting from Matadi, blasted the rocks in order to make a road by which the sections of his boat could be dragged along *en route* to the Upper Congo. Until I visited Matadi I did not know the meaning of the name which the natives gave to Stanley, *Bula Matadi*. It means *Breaker of Rocks*—a name to be proud of, surely ; and one which Stanley deserved. His authority was superseded by that of the government of the Congo, which to this day is called by the natives *Bula Matadi*—*Breaker of Rocks* and incidentally of *men*. It happened that Consul Casement was at Matadi ; and the captain and I were invited to a picnic which was given in his honour. It was a novel experience for Africa. We rowed down the river and landed for our lunch in a peculiar and pleasant place on piles of rock, of historie and even legendary interest.

During those days there was a representative missionary gathering at Matadi and I had the opportunity of meeting and conversing with missionaries from all over the Congo Free State. Some of them I had known before. All whom I met had but one story to tell in regard to the "Belgian atrocities," a story that might have been a chapter from the history of Hell.

They told of seeing more than fifty severed hands at a time, including hands of children, which the soldiers were taking to the white men to prove that they had killed people according to their orders. The black soldiers had also eaten the flesh of their victims. Sometimes the agents demanded an amount of food from the natives for themselves and the entire post which the natives could only continue to furnish by buying from other natives ; and they were expecting that when they

could buy no more they would be killed. In some villages when the impost of food was delivered the people had nothing left for themselves, and fed on leaves. When the rubber in certain districts was becoming exhausted and the tax was not reduced the people mixed the latex (juice of the rubber vine) with an inferior latex, and when they did so the agent, if it was discovered, made them eat it. The work about the posts was done by slaves, mostly women, and at night these women were obliged to be at the disposal of the native soldiers. Missionaries themselves had met soldiers driving to the post women tied together with ropes, to be held as hostages until their husbands could bring a certain amount of rubber. This was the usual means of compelling men to bring rubber. They often tortured the women in order to intimidate the men. But many of the hostages could not be redeemed and were starved to death. They told of the mutilations of the living, of hands and feet chopped off, and of men unsexed. They told of four or five men placed in a row one behind another and shot with one bullet, and of women and children crucified. They told of the population of certain districts reduced from thousands to hundreds, and in other districts wiped out entirely. It is estimated by some that since the ascendancy of King Leopold in the Congo the total population has decreased from twenty-five millions to fifteen millions, there being ten million murders set down to the account of the king.

Returning from Matadi to the steamer in the sultry tropical night, it seemed as if the very atmosphere were drenched with blood, that we breathed its vapours, and that the great swift-rolling tide beneath us was the blood of the slain millions, hurrying out to incarnadine the sea that beats against the shores of all the civilized world.

The greed of Leopold and the apathy of the nations are together responsible for the existence of present condi-

tions in the Congo. It is irrelevant to answer that there are also atrocities in Portuguese and other possessions of Africa. There is more oppression and cruelty in the Congo Free State than in all the rest of Africa. Moreover, we have no authority over Portugal and can exercise only the right of appeal and its moral influence. But the Powers signatory to the Brussels Act, with the United States in the lead, created the Congo Free State, and are still the formal guardians of its people. A conference of those Powers would without doubt deal with other evils in Africa besides those of the Congo Free State. To the average man, unversed in the forms of international usage, it would seem within the competence of any one of the Powers which committed to King Leopold a sacred trust upon certain definite conditions, to urge upon the other responsible powers the duty of meeting again to inquire whether those conditions have been fulfilled and to adjudicate the issues relating to their non-fulfillment.

Meanwhile, the Congo State lies bleeding at every pore, and those who are hoping and praying in all the world for a people who have ceased to hope and have never learned to pray, have their eyes turned towards the United States.

A missionary writing from Baringa in the Congo said : "An old chief came up to where we were standing. 'Oh, white man,' he pleaded, 'do have our work changed. We do not want to shirk it, but there is no longer any rubber in our district and my people are being killed for nothing. What am I to do?' I suggested that the inspector appointed by the king would no doubt come to Baringa and he could appeal to him. He asked how long it would be before the inspector would come. I said perhaps two months ; upon which he cried out, 'Two months ! It will be too late then. We shall all be killed before that time.' And after we had left him we

could hear him crying after us, 'We shall all be killed ! We shall all be killed !' "

Four years have passed, and in all likelihood the chief with his family has been killed long ago, leaving not even a name behind him, but only this haunting cry, that keeps ringing in one's heart.

So they all are crying to us with outstretched hands ; a people who call the white man, *Father*, and trust him with pathetic confidence until he betrays their trust and smites them with the rod of tyranny. I think I can hear their piteous cry wafted on the winds that wander over the great forest : "We shall all be killed ! We shall all be killed !"

XI

THE FANG

DURING my second and much longer term in Africa I lived at Baraka, a mission station two miles south of Libreville, in the Congo Français, on the great estuary of the Gaboon River, or, the *bay*, as I always called it. The coast tribe of the Gaboon is called the *Mpongwe*. But my work was almost entirely with the interior tribe—the *Fang*.

The Fang is probably the largest of all the tribes of West Africa. The Bulu of the Cameroon interior are a branch of the Fang, and there are several other branches. They occupy the interior of Cameroon and the Congo Français, extending north and south behind at least twelve coast tribes occupying three hundred miles of coast. M. de Brazza after extended travel among the Fang estimated that there were more than ten millions, and perhaps fifteen millions of them; but I think it unlikely that further knowledge will confirm this calculation. M. de Brazza is usually a most reliable authority; but he probably travelled through the more densely populated parts of the Fang territory.

Since most of my work was done among the Fang, along the Gaboon River, they are the tribe that I know best. I am very partial to them, and therefore, before going further I must say a word in regard to the pronunciation of this word, "Fang," and beg the reader not to speak of them as if they were a generation of vipers. The name is not pronounced in the least like our word

“fang,” and indeed the vowel sound in the latter word is unknown in the African dialects; the sound of the letter “a” is like that in the word “father.”

The whole Fang tribe has been moving towards the coast for many years, and they have already emerged at several points, notably Gaboon. Dr. Leighton Wilson, writing about 1860, speaks of them as having just appeared west of the Sierra del Crystal Mountains, one hundred miles east of the Gaboon Coast. Dr. Wilson, who had a more extended knowledge of the coast than any man of his time, speaks of the Fang as the most remarkable and most forceful people he had met in West Africa. They now have villages among the Mpongwe, and along the entire length of the Gaboon River and the tributaries of the river and estuary. This for years was my mission field, a territory one hundred and twenty miles east and west, and fifty miles north and south. The entire area is a network of waterways, which are also the highways; for there are very few bush-roads, and they are of the worst kind. I know of no more attractive field in West Africa. It combines the far more comfortable home of the coast, and the more hopeful work of the interior. By the use of a launch, or even a sailboat, the towns on the watercourses are easily and quickly accessible.

Thus, also, it allows for expansion and concentration of influence in their proper relation. Instead of the influence of the missionary being concentrated in an immediate community where he becomes practically a pastor, in such a field as that of the Gaboon watercourses he is rather as a bishop among native pastors, and influential in many communities. For the native, however meagre his education, if he be otherwise worthy, is always a better pastor than the foreigner, and needs only counsel. The church also is likely to be more independent in spirit, and resourceful. In a single community

where the white missionary is ever present, Christianity shares his prestige, and a few leaders being converted, the movement becomes popular, and many follow without deep convictions or earnest purpose. But in a community with which no white man is identified Christianity cannot acquire an artificial popularity; converts are earnest,—are leaders, not followers, and each group becomes the centre of a strong influence, exerted in service from the beginning, and the nucleus of a native church.

At the same time there may be a proper concentration of influence in boarding-schools and classes for religious training, and especially in a seminary for the training of catechists and ministers. This withal approaches most nearly to the method of our Master, who preached to multitudes in various places widely separated, the while He concentrated His influence in the training of the twelve. He who of all men might have dispensed with methods, was really a master of methods.

Before my time the only work of our mission among the Fang was at Angom Station, on the upper river, seventy miles above Baraka; but the work though faithfully done had been restricted to one town, which was a small factor in the great field that I have described, which larger field had never been opened to missionary work. When our missionary at Angom died, and his successor after a short period withdrew, the station was abandoned; and the little church not yet established in the faith, unable to stand alone, soon collapsed. A few years later, in 1902, when little remained but the name, the Angom church was formally dissolved by the Coriseo Presbytery.

I have written at some length of the Bulu of the interior. The Fang of the interior, at the head waters of the Gaboon, are like the Bulu, while some of those at the coast are quite civilized.

The Fang village in this territory is built close to the river or stream. The population of a village varies from fifty to three hundred; the average population is probably not more than a hundred persons. Those of the same village are closely related, usually brothers or first cousins, and their wives and children, with the elders, or grandfathers. They regard themselves as one family, and all the children of the village as brothers and sisters. Under no circumstances would they intermarry. The child addresses ever so many men as "Father," and ever so many women as "Mother." Parental authority is not exclusive; the whole town has more or less to say in the control and discipline of each child. The result is that while a score of parents are adding zest to existence in a fine squabble as to whether the child shall sit here, or there, shall do this, or that, the child, heedless of conflicting orders, does as he likes and goes where he pleases. Yet, one finds, as he knows them better, that the real parents are always distinguished and exercise the final authority.

The village consists of a single street running away from the river, though sometimes there is a second street, at right angles with the first, and occasionally even a third. On either side of the street the houses are built in straight rows, close together, and almost exactly the same. Among the Bulu the houses are detached; but among the Fang they are under one continuous roof. This arrangement is convenient for an enemy in time of war. For, to set fire to the first house is to burn the whole town; and nothing could burn more rapidly than dry thatch. Nearer the coast the enemy will often saturate the end of the first roof with kerosene—it is the only use they make of kerosene. Across each end of the street is a "palaver-house," which is the public place, where the men spend most of the day in talking, eating, sleeping and quarrelling. This is the *club-house* of the men,

and the women enter it only on privilege. A missionary entering a town will nearly always be sure of an audience in the palaver-house.

The houses have bark walls held by horizontal strips of bamboo tied with rope of vine, and supported by upright poles two feet apart, which are sharpened at the lower end and stuck in the ground. The roof is of palm thatch, and there is no floor. Not a nail is used in the entire construction of the house. Nearer the coast, bark is not used for walls. They are made of split bamboo, attached horizontally to upright poles.

The interior is a single room with beds around the walls. The bed consists of straight round poles laid lengthwise upon two cross-poles, the head being supported by a wooden pillow. Upon these beds the natives sleep with nothing under them and nothing over them. But they usually keep a fire at night, which is made on the earth floor. There is no outlet for the smoke, but it escapes through a narrow open space between the walls and the roof. The door is tight closed at night, and often a family will enjoy themselves around a smouldering fire in smoke so dense that a white man could scarcely enter.

Their houses are kept as clean inside as their construction allows. But they are always in a state of disorder. The native mind has no categories. The native's knowledge consists of isolated facts which he feels no mental compulsion to classify; neither do the women take pleasure in household order; and the notion of each article having a regular and proper place is foreign to their minds. However civilized they may become in the future, I can hardly think that the teapot under the bed or the pig in the parlour would ever offend their sense of propriety.

In the middle of the front wall is a rectangular hole,

that looks like a window, but it is both door and window. At night it is closed by propping a piece of bark against it. The successful entrance of this door is a gymnastic feat requiring long practice for its performance, and we can afford to watch the white man's first attempt. He has seen the black man pass through it so easily that he does not suspect any difficulty. Approaching with assurance he lifts one leg quite high and passes it over the sill, only to find that he cannot get his head in; for not only is the door very low but the ragged thatched eaves of the roof project immediately in front of it. In the attempt his helmet, striking the eaves, rolls into the street. He goes after the helmet, brushes off some of the dirt, and approaching a second time, though with less assurance, he puts the other leg through the door, which is no improvement whatever upon the first effort, and he loses his helmet again. A third time he essays to enter, but with a step that indicates a rise of temperature. He thrusts his head and shoulders through the door, then tries to bring a foot in after him; but, invariably failing to get his foot nearly high enough to pass the sill he trips, falls forward, and goes plunging into the house sprawling on all fours, and only by extraordinary exertion escapes the fire in the middle of the room. The children, if they are not accustomed to the white man, scream with fright, and the grown people laugh without restraint. Those in the street laugh still louder and afford every evidence that the rear view of the performance—the unintelligible exertions, the sudden disappearance and the feet lingering on the door-sill—was an entertainment which they would greatly enjoy a second time. The white man gets up out of the dust and the ashes, glares fiercely around and asks if anybody knows where his helmet is. Some time in the future, after an extended and distressing experience he may chance to observe exactly how the black man enters

his small door. He neither halts nor hesitates ; but throwing up one leg, he throws his head down at the same time, probably extending an arm in front of him, and thrusting both head and leg through together, he bolts into the house. Near the coast the houses are better. There are often several rooms in a house. They have doors that swing on hinges, and windows the same, but unglazed. They have grass mats upon the beds. But all this is the result of the imported civilization.

The idle life of the Fang, especially in the interior, and his freedom from responsibility, seem to the impatient white man to have obliterated from his mind the idea of time. The more prosperous people near the coast have a passion for clocks, but it is because they like to hear them tick and strike. A Fang cannot conceive that he has wronged you if he comes several days late to keep an engagement. This unreliableness in everything where time is a factor is one of the chief trials of the white man in Africa. But he ought to regard the native's viewpoint and consider how very irritating and really discouraging to the native must be the white man's incessant hurry. "We are not in a hurry," says the black man. "Why should you come to Africa to set us all hurrying? Has it made your own people so very happy that you want to share with us the blessing of haste?"

The African is the most sociable man in the world. He could not easily be killed with work even the hardest: he is not much afraid of it. But isolate him, take him away from his people, and he could easily die of homesickness. He is strongly emotional and warmly affectionate by nature. He loves his children, and sometimes embraces them tenderly, but he never kisses them. The kiss is meaningless to the African. They have never seen any such thing except between white people. I am almost ashamed to tell their interpretation of it as some

of them have seen it executed and have reported to their people ; but I presume it will do no harm. They think that white people, in kissing, expectorate into each other's mouths. The word by which they designate the kiss is a compound which means "to exchange saliva."—No wonder it is not popular ! When those at the coast begin the practice of this fine art, it is usually accompanied by a sound loud enough to start a team of horses.

All their spare time they sit in the palaver-house and talk, stopping for an occasional nap. The old men as they sit scratching themselves with the itch relate wonderful tales and tell infinite lies about their achievements when young, how many women eloped with them, how many enemies they had killed in war, and how they had fought wild animals with unheard-of bravery. But they turn out interesting tales and are always listened to respectfully because of their years.

The chief factor in the social life is the marriage customs and the relations of husband and wife. The woman is regarded as inferior in every way to the man. It would be disgraceful to a man to be caught eating with his wife. Her duty is to work for him and to provide for him. She is bought with a price and is a part of his wealth ; indeed, a man's wealth and influence are measured by the number of his wives. The son inherits the father's wives, all but his own mother. Frequently in the forest one may see a woman staggering along the rough bush-path under a load of forty or fifty pounds, and perhaps carrying her poor babe in a strap hung at her side, while her lordly husband walks before her with only his gun or a knife. In some tribes a wife must keep a certain distance behind her husband as they walk. If he should fall she must also fall, lest she laugh at him.

A man and his wife once came to me from a distant town, the woman carrying a load of food which they



MAN AND WIFE.

The woman always carries the load.



TWO MEN DANCING.

The music, supplied by various drums, may have charms to soothe the savage breasts; it certainly would soothe no other kind.

wished to sell, the man carrying nothing. I told them that I had no use for the food and could not buy it ; whereupon the man appealed to my pity and urged that the poor woman, who was exhausted, and who was suffering with an ulcer on her foot, was not able to carry the load back home. I replied that I knew how to relieve her, and I asked them both to turn their backs and close their eyes. They did as I asked, probably expecting that I would perform some miracle that would make the burden light. But, taking the burden from the woman's back, I suddenly put it upon the man, and threw the strap over his shoulder. He flung it upon the ground with an angry protest at the great indignity I had put upon him in the presence of his wife.

Inconsistent with this is his love of his mother, of which I have spoken before ; but it may be mentioned again, for it is the strongest sentiment and the deepest emotion in the mind and heart of the Afriean. He always loves his mother more than his wife. The wife is also expected to love the members of her own family more than her husband ; but the love of mother is strongest in the men. She is the one who will defend him against the machinations of his wives and be true to him when all others combine to denounce or to injure him. One day on an English steamer a traveller who was standing on deck and teasing some Kruboy in a boat below remarked to an Old Coaster how very good-natured they were. The Old Coaster told him something to say to one of them that involved a reflection on his mother. The traveller made the remark and was startled and somewhat frightened when the "good-natured" Kruboy turned upon him in a rage, cursed him and threatened to kill him. If he had been ashore he might have paid the penalty with his life. The African, old and young, thinks he has fully justified any violent assault upon another when he says : "He

cursed my mother." Any reflection whether it be more or less serious is called a "curse."

A man also loves his children more than his wife. Often the headwife is the one who bears the most children. Children are not weaned until the age of three years or thereabouts. During all this period of lactation the husband and wife observe absolute continence in regard to each other, though not necessarily in regard to others.

A man has as many wives as he can afford to buy. The idea of marrying "just for love" is laughable. Such an act is sometimes cited as indicating weakness of character. Marriages of "strong-minded" men are controlled by expediency and convenience. In the territory of the Gaboon I know of no man that has more than ten wives; but in the farther interior some chiefs have half a hundred. Yet, though the possession of many wives is the ambition of every man, most of them never possess more than one. The dowry which a man pays for a wife is enormous; and none but the most successful traders are able to earn the amount. A dowry is often kept intact and passed from father to son, doing repeated service. A man may also procure a dowry by the sale of a sister. I have heard Fang boys boasting that they were rich because they had several sisters.

For those who are not so fortunate as to inherit a dowry or to have a sister, there are two alternatives; first they may remain unmarried, with the result that they will be regarded as contemptibly poor, and will be engaged in endless palavers with all the husbands of the town; or, they may boldly steal a woman of some other town, which will cause war between the two towns, and in the end, after several or many persons have been killed, the whole town will have to pay the dowry. Sometimes a man may have an incomplete dowry and may by working earn sufficient to complete it. The following would be an ordinary

dowry among the Fang living near the coast : Ten goats, five sheep, five guns, twenty trade-boxes (plain wooden chests), one hundred heads of tobacco, ten hats, ten looking-glasses, five blankets, five pairs of trousers, two dozen plates, fifty dollars' worth of calico, fifty dollars' worth of rum, one chair and one cat. In addition to the above he must make frequent presents to his wife's relations, who may be expected to arrive at any time and in any number for an indefinite visit. If there is any hatred in the heart of the African man it is usually directed towards his wife's relations. A man is all his lifetime subject to bondage by reason of his wife.

A certain fellow missionary was married to another missionary. Some of the African boys, knowing that the white man had paid no dowry, expressed envious regrets at the ease with which a white man marries a wife. "All you white men have to do," they said, "is simply to *ask* a woman ; and the whole palaver is finished." This also made my celibacy the more incomprehensible.

When a wife dies without having borne children the husband has the right to insist that the dowry be returned. A part of it and sometimes all of it will have been spent, and the people are reluctant to make up the loss ; so the request that the dowry be returned after the death of a wife nearly always leads to war, though they do not question the right of the custom. If the wife runs away either to her own or another town, the dowry paid for her must be returned, if the woman is not sent back. In nearly every case her people will find it more convenient to send her back than to restore the dowry ; so their bad passions of greed and immorality are balanced the one against the other, and the large dowry serves the purpose of keeping husband and wife together. But if the woman runs away not to her own town, but to some other town, eloping with another man, her people will often prevent war

between the two towns by inducing her to return. Otherwise they themselves will become involved in the war. Nearly all the wars between different communities of the same tribe begin with a "woman-palaver."

A woman after an attempt to run away, or upon being brought back, is usually put in stocks until she becomes submissive. Her foot is passed through a hole in a heavy block of wood about four feet long, the hole then being closed by a bolt. She is kept thus night and day. The irritation of the rough wood often produces a very bad ulcer. A woman in stocks is a common sight in the Fang towns. One day while I was in a Fang town on the river, I heard a woman crying in the next town as if in great pain. I asked an explanation and said I must go and see what was the matter. Some men of her town being present tried to persuade me not to go by telling a variety of conflicting lies that made me suspicious. I went to the town, and found in the palaver-house a withered old savage punishing his young wife by putting her hand in a large and heavy block, with the help of his younger brothers. He had made a small hole in the block and was dragging her hand through it. The hole was so small that he thought she would not be able to get her hand out, and it would not require the usual bolt. The hand was about one-third of the way through the hole and was already badly bruised. I knew the Fang towns, and just how far I could safely venture to use force in each, for they differ widely. The individual counts for nothing; everything depends upon the feeling or attitude of the whole town towards the white man. The sight of the woman and her crying were unbearable; I ordered the old chief to withdraw her hand immediately. He knew just how to do it and I did not. He began to argue, but I said: "Argument afterwards: remove her hand instantly." Still he talked, and the woman cried. But a

moment later my hand clutched his throat and he found himself pinioned against the opposite wall. Thereupon he indicated his readiness to comply with my request. He dragged her hand out of the block ; the women of the town, all assembled, led her away as they moaned pathetically in sympathy, the woman herself still crying. A little later I followed them into the house and found them pouring warm water over the bruised hand to soothe the pain ; but the woman still cried.

Meantime, the old man told me the story. It was typical of the extreme injustice often committed against the African woman : A young woman married against her will to a very old man, with the inevitable consequence that she despised him and cared too much for somebody else. I made the incident the text of my sermon and preached an up-to-date sermon on *Woman's Rights*.

The old man's cupidity, always alert, suggested a happy expedient. In a suave manner he deliberately proposed that since I knew so well how to treat a woman, he would as a favour accept a proper dowry from me, renounce his claim upon her and let me marry her. But I exclaimed, at least to myself : "This is so sudden !"

But would not the old man immediately carry out his purpose when I had left the town ? No, he would not. An unexpected interruption in the performance of such an act he would regard as a sign that the act would be attended by misfortune to himself, and he would not repeat it. And that particular act, if he had repeated it, would certainly have been attended by misfortune ; inflicted not by any invisible power, but by a white man. For, having undertaken to prevent the wrong, if I should afterwards allow it, I would lose influence and be despised in that town. But lest the reader should think of me as a very warlike individual, with a Bible in one hand and

a big stick in the other, I hasten to say that, except in self-defense, I have only three times, in more than twice so many years, laid violent hands upon a native ; and all three times the outrageous treatment of a woman was the occasion.

Less dowry is paid for a child than for "a whole woman," as the Fang would say. A man frequently pays the dowry for a very young girl, who is then taken to his town and given in charge to his mother to raise, and the mother will probably "raise" her very early in the morning. She trains the girl for her son, and at a proper age delivers his wife to him. Children are often betrothed to each other, the boy's father paying the dowry to the girl's father, the children of course having nothing to say in the matter. I am inclined to think that these latter are the happiest marriages in Africa. A man once came to Efulen in great distress saying that his little daughter, a mere baby, was very ill and that if we did not help her she would surely die and, he added, the worst of it was that she was betrothed and he had received a portion of the dowry which he would be obliged to return if she should die. His grief was truly pitiable. I have known instances where a child was betrothed before it was born, the dowry to be kept intact and returned in case the child should not be a girl.

One Sunday I walked to an inland town two hours behind Baraka, where I found the people engaged in talking a dowry-palaver. I had to wait until this was finished before I could get a hearing. The occasion of the palaver was briefly this : Some years ago, in another town, there were two brothers whose father died leaving them their sister as an inheritance. A husband was found for this sister who paid a handsome dowry. The elder brother appropriated the dowry and took to himself a wife. Several years passed ; the younger brother

was grown to manhood, and he too desired a wife but had no dowry with which to procure her. He demanded from his brother his rightful share of his sister's dowry. The dowry of course was gone ; but the elder brother now had a daughter five years old, and it was proposed that he should find a husband for this child, thus procuring a dowry with which to settle with his younger brother. The trouble between the brothers became serious ; and the people, wishing to avoid war, induced them to ask a certain neighbouring chief, who had a reputation for wisdom and diplomacy, to arbitrate between them and decide the matter.

This was the palaver that was in progress when I entered the town on Sunday, and I heard the closing speeches and the decision of the judge, which was as follows: "I will cut the palaver thus: The elder brother must dispose of his daughter as speedily as possible, and pay to his younger brother the sum of the dowry. Meanwhile, to procure obedience to this, the elder brother's wife will remain in this town as my wife until the dowry is paid."

This amicable arrangement was agreed to by all the parties concerned.

This chief deserved his reputation for cleverness. A few weeks later I was passing through his town when he called after me and asked if I were going to pass by without making him a little present of some tobacco in recognition of our intimate friendship.

In reply I asked : "Why do you not rather complain that I pass your town without stopping to tell you God's Word? Is tobacco more important?"

His sprightly answer, delivered with perfect simplicity, was, "No doubt God's Word is more important ; but tobacco also is God's gift, and I am very grateful to Him for it."

Some of their immoral customs one can only mention with reserve even in writing. It is always regarded as amiable, and is sometimes required, that a host should give his wife to a guest. The wife is not consulted. Yet, if the guest, being a Christian, should refuse to comply with this custom, the woman, regarding herself as repulsed, will become enraged and vow vengeance upon the visitor; it will be positively dangerous for him to eat food in that town lest she poison him. It is common also for a man afflicted with a long illness to ask a friend to assume his marital relations until his recovery.

In one instance this request was made of a Christian man by an intimate friend, and at the woman's suggestion. The man in his distress appealed to me to talk the palaver with the sick man. If a man has many wives, it is regarded as magnanimous for him to take but little notice of social wrong-doing; and the result is boundless immorality.

Charges of adultery are often made for the purpose of extortion. For this same purpose husbands and wives together often conspire against another person.

Polygamy is the greatest obstacle to the introduction of Christianity. It is not identical with the question of African sensuality; but involves a man's wealth, influence and reputation, all of which depend upon the number of his wives. It is the very foundation of the whole structure of African society and is as firmly rooted as their Cameroon Mountain in the African soil. Critics of missions say that the obstacle is insuperable. But we believe in a Power that can say to the mountain: "Be thou removed; and be thou cast into the sea." And that same Power is actually removing polygamy to-day. Moreover, the critics do not seem to see or do not understand that if polygamy be an insuperable obstacle to Christianity it is also an insuperable obstacle to civiliza-



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*Dr. Good died at Efulen at the age of thirty-seven. He was
a man of the Livingstone type.*

tion, which they advocate. The renouncing of polygamy and putting away his wives with all the loss that it involves serves as a final test of the African's sincerity in professing the Christian faith. The man of the parable said: "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." When at the close of a service in a native town I gave a similar invitation a man replied with a sorrowful shake of his head: "I have married *five* wives, and cannot come."

In the later chapters of this book I shall tell of men who, notwithstanding the jeers and contempt of the people, have put away many wives and have come.

Among the real negro tribes of the Soudan (for the tribes of Central and Southern Africa are not pure negroes) there is a central government and a general organization. But there is no tribal organization among the Fang or any other tribe south of the Calabar River. The village, or a group of villages close together and immediately related, is the unit and the entirety of organization; although a common language is a bond of sympathy and they might freely unite against a common foe. Their government is nearly patriarchal in form. There is a headman in each village who is usually advanced in years. But unless he has many more wives than any other man he takes counsel in all matters with the elders of the town; and there are many public discussions in which all the men have a right to advise. There is no despotism, except the despotism of custom which no chief would challenge.

The right hand of the government is a secret society of the men, usually called *The Gorilla Society*, or sometimes *The Leopard Society*. This or some corresponding society is found in all the tribes of West Africa, though there are details of difference even between the communities of the same tribe. The head of the society is not supposed to be a

man, but a gorilla. They all know that this is not true but they have agreed to impose this lie upon each other and no one would dare say that the head of the society is a man. This man, or gorilla, is a witch-doctor and has great knowledge of witchcraft and all the occult arts. When a person dies the gorilla can tell whether he has been a victim of witchcraft, and he has means of discovering the witch. In order to realize the power of this man and the society one need only remember that nearly every death in Africa is imputed to witchcraft. His knowledge, however, is not regarded as absolute. He designates certain persons whom he professes to see in a vision, and they are then tried by ordeal.

It would be impossible to exaggerate the African terror of witchcraft. When it is announced that a certain deceased person has died of witchcraft, a panic ensues. They run back and forth in the street with wild, staring eyes, uttering imprecations and demanding blood.

The common ordeal is to drink some poisonous concoction and if it does not produce vertigo the accused is adjudged innocent; but if he staggers or falls he is guilty, and the people, all standing around and looking on with spears and swords in their hands, immediately rush upon him and kill him, usually cutting the body to pieces. Far more women than men die this death.

Among the Fang this society represents the worship of ancestors. The motive of the worship is not devotion to their ancestors but rather that they may procure their help in every undertaking, good and bad. Each man as directed by the head of the society secures the skull of a father or uncle recently deceased and after various ceremonies, of which I shall speak when I describe the native religion, he puts the skull in a box made for the purpose. No woman may see the contents of the box, nor is she supposed to know what it contains. If she should see the

skull she will die. And she really does die, if it be known that she has seen it. She is doubtless poisoned by the society. The spirit of the ancestor, if the skull is well treated, will punish with sickness or death a disobedient or false wife, or any other enemy. This it is supposed will in some degree restrain disobedience on the part of wives and secure justice and honesty between men. Thus it serves the purpose of government. Where the power of the ancestor is the efficient agent rather than the supernatural power of the head of the society, the latter has less prominence and often does not profess to be more than a man. But where he is regarded as a gorilla, or spirit, no woman or child or uninitiated man may see him and live. Therefore as he approaches a town he gives warning by roaring like a gorilla. The women and children flee for their lives. Or, if unable to escape, they fall upon the ground and shut their eyes, mothers also putting their hands over their babies' eyes, until the gorilla passes out of the town, after having helped himself to chickens, bananas or anything that he desires.

The African, it is said, loves idleness, amusement and war; of these three he probably loves war most.

Except in the vicinity of the foreign governments or the missions, war is the usual condition; not only between tribe and tribe but between village and village. Beyond the range of civilization there is no salutation between persons casually meeting and no need of it; a man hearing another approaching in the forest would hide.

Nsama, which means a crowd, is also the word for chance, or opportunity; because a man does not go anywhere alone and a crowd is his opportunity. Of course villages are often on friendly terms and some may manage to remain so; but in such cases there are usually strong reasons of expediency.

The usual beginning of a war is the stealing of a woman,

as I have said ; but this does not always lead to war and the shedding of blood. Nearer the coast milder measures of retaliation are often preferred, and when a woman is stolen the offended town will capture one of the other side and keep him prisoner until the woman is returned. The solidarity of the village in the native mind is impressed upon one continually. They also capture persons of a village in which some one owes them a dowry which he is reluctant to pay. In all such matters the whole village is held responsible for each one of its inhabitants. Many a time, travelling on the river, I have been about to call at a town when one of my crew in alarm has told me that there was a palaver between that town and his town and he dare not enter there. At the next town another one of the crew may raise the same objection ; and another at the next. After a thorough trial I had to depend almost entirely on men of the coast rather than the Fang, for at least the first two years. It was not a cowardly imagination on the part of my Fang crew ; they were in real danger.

On one occasion one of my Fang boys, Ndong Koni, my best helper and most devoted friend, accompanied me to a certain Fang town with which his people had a palaver. He had not a vestige of fear in him and he told me nothing about it, but depended upon my presence for his safety. When I was about to hold a service in the street I observed that the people were muttering in anger, and at last there was an outburst of wrath which, as I saw in a moment, was directed against Ndong Koni. A "sister" of Ndong Koni, who as a matter of fact was not nearer than a second cousin, having married a man in this town, had recently run away from a brutal husband, and her people had not yet made her return, or, unwilling to send her back, had not yet returned the dowry. The proposition was to seize Ndong Koni and put him in



NDONG KONI.

The first, the most faithful and the bravest of all my African friends.

stocks until the palaver should be settled. Once they should lay hands upon him nothing could be done to restrain them ; for when degraded and ignorant people have committed one hostile act they become excited and violent ; they are then a mob. I hurried to Ndong Koni's side and with him I stepped back from the crowd while I addressed them and presented various arguments.

I said first : " Ndong Koni while in my service does not belong to his town, but to me ; he is my son, and you have no palaver with me. Now suppose that one of your own young men should work for me—and I see several fine-looking young men here with strong arms to pull an oar. Suppose that a young man of your town should go with me to Alum, where you have a palaver, and that the people of Alum should attempt to seize him, what would you like to have me do ? Shall I say : ' He is only a black boy and I am a white man ; I don't care what you do with him.' Or shall I say : ' The colour of the skin makes no difference, so long as the blood is red. This boy while he works for me is my son ; and if you should harm a white man's son you will have a palaver with me and with the white governor at Libreville who owns the gunboat.' Now what would you like me to say if one of these young men should go with me to Alum and the people should want to put him in stocks ? "

They shouted in reply : " We would want you to say he was your son. Those are good words. You are the father of us all."

" Yes," said I, " I have many, many children ; but my life is full of trouble, for they do not obey me."

The chief and a few others were as hostile as ever, but there was a marked change in the attitude of the people ; and in order to force an assertion of their friendliness I attempted a grand bluff, while I was inwardly quaking.

Approaching the threatening chief I laid my hand upon

his arm and said: "Come and seize this boy if you dare. Come with me and before my face put your hand upon my son."

"No," cried the people; and they crowded between the chief and Ndong Koni. The palaver was finished; but I thought it well to pass on to the next town and not wait to hold a service. Before I got away however they crowded around me, saying: "Since you are the father of the Fang surely you ought to give us some tobacco. A father gives tobacco to his sons."

It is thus frequently in Africa; the serious ends in burlesque; and, perhaps as frequently, comedy ends in tragedy.

The chief himself, coming forward just before my departure, assured me of his good will by solemnly taking my hand in his and spitting in it. I know the theory of some regarding this touching demonstration of affection,—that the native means only to blow with his breath, symbolic of imparting a blessing, and that the spitting is incidental, a "by-product"—so to speak—of the blessing. But as I looked at my hand I realized that it was not a theory, but a condition, that confronted me, a condition that called loudly for soap and water—*warm* water and plenty of soap. I have before this acknowledged the receipt of blessings in disguise; but I would cheerfully renounce any possible benefits that might accrue from a blessing coming in such a disguise as this. And if the old chief had approached me a second time with the offer of a blessing on the other hand, I would have said: "Please give me a curse instead, by way of variety."

The form of "socialism," by which any one of a village may be seized and killed by the enemy for the wrong of any other of that same village, is even carried further, and to the extent that one person may be given over to the enemy for the wrong done by another person. I have

already said, in reference to the Bulu, that at the end of a war the ordinary way of settling the palaver is that the side that has done the most killing will pay over to the other side a corresponding number of women, who become wives or sometimes slaves in the enemy's town.

In war they are not careful to kill only the enemy, but often shoot recklessly at any one in sight who might possibly belong to the other side, not waiting to be sure about it. In the dark forest they often mistake a friend for a foe, with dreadful consequences. On the river it is not so frequent.

One evening one of my boys, Amvama, who afterwards became a catechist, an honest and lovable boy, was in a canoe on the river, fishing with a net. It was evening and he was in the shade of overhanging trees. Several canoes approached and the people mistaking Amvama fired upon him. He hastened to the bank and leaving the canoe and net fled into the forest, while they seized all that he had left. They afterwards learned who it was that they had so nearly killed. Amvama's people demanded his canoe and net, which were surrendered. But the civilized Amvama cared less for the loss of these things than for the personal outrage done him in their attempt to kill him. He indignantly put the question : "Why did you fire upon me?"

They only replied : "How did we know it was you?"

"How did you know it was *not* I?" responded Amvama. But it is not likely that the discussion contributed greatly to the science of ethics among the Fang.

There is a strange war-custom in all the tribes of West Africa unlike anything that I have known or heard of elsewhere. Often when a woman is stolen from a small and poorly defended town, the people, desiring to make a desperate protest, or being unusually resentful and fierce, will kill some person of a third town that has noth-

ing whatever to do with the palaver, by way of drawing attention to the fact that a crime has been committed and of impressing the community with its enormity. But it seems hard that a man should be punished for a crime without having the pleasure of committing it. Sometimes, however, this is done to enlist the help of the third town. For, this third town according to custom is not supposed to retaliate directly but will unite with the town which has killed one of their people in wreaking vengeance upon the first town, which was the original offender and therefore the cause of all the trouble.

Imagine A, B and C to be three schoolboys ; the principle of the custom then is this (if the colloquial language may be pardoned) : A licks B ; B, not being able to lick A, lies in wait for C and licks him ; then C joins with B and they together lick A. The moral beauty of this principle is evident : A, B and C each get licked.

On one occasion when holding a service in a town we heard two shots fired in rapid succession in another town close by. Each shot killed a man ; one of them was a chief. They were unarmed and suspecting no harm ; for neither they nor their people had anything to do with the palaver which was the occasion of the killing ; nor had they even heard of it. A man of the town that I was visiting and who was then sitting in the audience had just stolen a woman from another town, which latter town was small and poorly defended. Being desperate, and in order that they might not be a prey to stronger towns, they resorted to this peculiar mode of justice that they might form a strong coalition against the enemy. In this they succeeded and fourteen persons were killed before that palaver was ended.

Among the Mpongwe, in the old days before the foreign power was established, and among the closely related tribes south of them, this custom prevailed in an extreme

form. A woman being stolen, the people of the offended town would hurry to another town near by before the news had reached them and would kill somebody. This town would then hurry to the next and kill somebody there, each town doing likewise until perhaps five or six persons of as many different towns would be killed in one night. The last town would then, with the help of the others, demand justice from the first. It may be that the object of this frightful custom was to restrain men from committing the initial crime, that might be attended with such widespread death, bringing upon themselves the curses of many people. For above all things the African cannot bear to be disliked and cannot endure execration.

The chief amusements of the Fang and other tribes of West Africa are music, dancing and story-telling. In these, and at all times, they exhibit a strong sense of humour, truly surprising in an uncivilized people. In this faculty they are next to our own race and quite unequalled by others. In their survival of suffering and oppression, in their easy forgetfulness of injury, and their constant buoyancy of mind, who can tell how much they owe to their keen sense of humour? The pain of suffering and the weight of heavy burdens are mitigated by frequent laughter. They are fond of incongruous comparisons. On one occasion when we were travelling on the river there was on board a white man who was very bald, and who attracted considerable attention from the crew because they had never seen a bald white man before. One of their number cheered up a lot of tired boys by remarking that the head of that white man was like a fresh-laid egg.

They are passionately fond of music; but their sense of rhythm is far more keen than their sense of melody. Accordingly the drum in various forms is the favourite instrument. There are two principal kinds of drum,

both made from the trunk of a tree hollowed out, and about four feet long. One of these stands upright and the open end is covered with deerskin. It is beaten with the palms of the hand. They play remarkably well upon this drum. With great variety in the beat they maintain a constant and perfect rhythm.

The other drum, which is larger, lies on its side, has closed ends, and a long narrow opening in the side. It is beaten with two heavy sticks. The wood of the drum is very resonant and it can be heard at a distance of many miles. It is used as a kind of telegraph between towns, and messages are sent upon it. This is done by means of a secret language of inarticulate sounds which they are able to imitate upon the drum, according to the part of it which they strike and the regularity of the stroke. The women do not understand it, except a few common calls. Neither would any one be allowed to teach it to a white man. This telegraphic use of the drum is extraordinary; messages of startling definiteness are sometimes sent ahead of a caravan over a great distance being repeated in town after town. This drum, therefore, bulky and unlikely as it appears, is very skillfully made, being precise in form and with varying shades of thickness in different parts. As to its musical qualities, it may have charms to soothe the savage breast; I am very sure that it could soothe no others; and among white people it would make more savages than it would soothe.

Besides the drums there are several other instruments, but of less importance. The most common of these is a wooden harp with strings made of a vegetable fibre, which respond to the fingers with tinkling notes. There is also a xylophone consisting of a row of parallel wooden bars, graduated in length, and placed upon a base of two parallel banana stocks, which lie upon the ground.

Banana stocks are used because they are non-conducting. The wooden bars are hammered with sticks. The notes are pleasant ; but the Fang do not make much of it, as it is not sufficiently noisy to impress them. There is still another in common use ; a harp with a single string, the sound of which is like the magnified music of a Jew's-harp.

Their singing, like their instrumental music, has not much "tune" to it, but there is always a stirring rhythm and a certain weird and touching quality, which impressed me the more because I could never quite understand it,—the same elusive charm that characterizes the singing of the negroes of the Southern States. I do not refer to the negro songs composed by white men, which are entirely different, but the melodies that the negro sings at his work. The native songs are of the nature of chants, and turn upon several notes of a minor scale. But it is not quite our minor scale. There is one prominent and characteristic note, which I confess defied me, though it may have been a minor third slightly flat. I found it very difficult to reduce their songs to musical notation.

The words of most of the songs are improvised by the leading voice, and have a regular refrain in which all join. But if they wish to sing in choruses, as in their dance-songs, any words will serve the purpose and the same sentence may be repeated for an hour. "Our old cow she crossed the road" were luminous with propriety and sentiment in comparison with the words that they will sometimes sing in endless repetition. "The leopard caught the monkey's tail," "The roots grow underneath the ground," are samples of their songs. Their canoe-songs I like best of all. The rhythm is appropriate and one almost hears the sound of the paddles. They sing nearly all the time as they use the paddle or the oar, and

on a long journey they say it makes the hard work easier. If they should take a white man on a journey and, not being his regular workmen, should expect a "dash"—a fee, or present, in African vernacular—the leading voice will sing the white man's praises on the journey, alluding in particular to his benevolence, while the others all respond, seeking thus by barefaced flattery and good-natured importunity to shame the meanness out of him.

Dancing, both with old and young, takes the place in general of our games and sports, except that the men also hunt. The music used is that of the two drums already described, especially the upright one, and they usually sing as they dance. They can scarcely listen to the music without indulging the movements of the dance.

Men and women never dance together; and they have nothing like our conventional dances. There is something of the freedom and unrestrained movements of the Italian and Hungarian peasant-dances; yet in comparison with these latter the African dance is a very uncouth performance, though frequently difficult, and extremely grotesque. Its peculiar characteristic is that the feet are no more active than any other part of the body; arms, shoulders, abdomen, head—all the parts and every muscle are set in motion, sometimes including even the eyes and the tongue. Their champions we would call contortionists rather than dancers.

Sometimes famous dancers from different towns, in fantastic and absurd decorations and dress, will contend for the championship in a contest of several days. They dance in the middle of the street before an audience of almost the entire population of the different towns seated on the ground on either side of the street. The music is not adapted to the dance, but the dance to the changing music. The musicians have hard work, and they make

it harder. Streaming with perspiration they beat the drums with changing time and increasing rapidity until they are almost as nearly exhausted as the dancers, and one might think that the music had gone mad. Without doubt the native dance is a fine bodily exercise; and they dance so much that the exercise is perhaps the chief factor in the development of the strength and athletic form of the native.

The women dance on the moonlight nights, and often through the entire night. They all sing as they dance, most of them standing in a circle while individuals one after another step into the middle of the circle and lead the performance. The men are standing around looking on and when a leader finishes her part one or several of her gentlemen friends will step into the circle and embrace her. These dances have always appeared innocent enough to me. But the native Christians, who know better than I, and who also know the side-scenes that invariably attend the dance though not a part of it, uniformly condemn the dance, and say that no Christian ought to take part in it.

They dance on all festive occasions—a betrothal, a marriage, a victory in war, the end of a war, or the end of a term of mourning for the dead. The men decorate themselves with paint and feathers, and often they wear around their ankles strings of native bells, consisting of the dried hull of a certain nut, into which while still green they insert small stones, which make a peculiarly metallic and pleasant noise.

They usually form in two long lines in the street, with the drums across one end. Some great dancer will perform in the middle, down the lines and back, sometimes in graceful movements, and sometimes in contortions almost fiendish until his body seems to have no shape at all “distinguishable in member, joint or limb.” Some-

times they all move with him down the street and back. They sing and shout as they dance, shaking the bells on their ankles, and occasionally all together suddenly stamping upon the ground. They mark the time to perfection, and the effect of so many men keeping the time perfectly while their movements differ, together with the volume of wild song and shouting is quite fascinating.

The chief dance of the men is that of their Secret Society, which is performed only on very dark nights, the women being compelled to retire to their houses and close the door lest they see it and die. In this dance they deliberately try to be unhuman and hideous in their movements. I once witnessed this dance when I had been but a short time in Africa and did not know the serious nature of my intrusion; and I suppose I came much nearer suffering violence at their hands than I knew at the time. It is the height of indiscretion to show unnecessary contempt for native customs, or to disregard their feelings for the sake of satisfying mere curiosity. But I was not aware of their feelings until it was too late to retreat.

Hearing the drumming and the roar of the gorilla-man I knew they were having a characteristic dance and with a lantern in my hand I started along the bush-path to see it and entered the town before they were aware of my approach. The offense was double. I had turned the light upon the performance, possibly allowing women to see the gorilla-man through the chinks of the houses; and I myself had defied him by looking upon him with uninitiated eyes, for which according to custom I ought to die. He approached me whirling about and contorting his body, roaring the while like a gorilla, and brandished his sword very close to my face, to one side and then the other. But I was not intimidated for the sufficient reason that I did not believe he would touch me. Then, as

I stood my ground, he thought to terrorize me by his supernatural powers, which the native would fear far more than a sword. He brought out a number of human bones and laying them on the ground before me he performed a ceremony which was supposed to bring down upon me the wrath of his ancestors. But of the two dangers I was rather more afraid of the sword than the ancestors. They all saw my indifference and concluded that I had with me some fetish stronger than theirs and powerful for my protection ; and they resumed the dance while I looked on, having first accommodated them by turning down the light. It was a strange sight, these black phantom-forms darting to and fro in the dark, like flitting shadows often with a wriggling, reptile motion, and shrieking the while like hobgoblins.

I have already spoken at length of the African's love of story-telling, and have given many examples. The following two stories are types of a large class.

The elephant and the gorilla hate each other, for each thinks himself king of the forest. Meeting one day in the bush-path, each refused to step aside to let the other pass.

"Let me pass," said the elephant ; "for these woods belong to me."

The gorilla beat his breast and made a noise like the sound of a drum. Then he replied : "Oh, Oh, Oh, Oh ! These woods do not belong to you. I am master here."

The elephant would not move aside ; so the gorilla broke down a tree and beat the elephant to death. And the proof of it is that the prostrate tree was found beside the body of the dead elephant.

The sun and moon are great enemies. They are the same age but each claims to be older than the other. The sun is the friend of the people and brings daylight and gladness. The moon hates people and devours them like

insects ; she brings darkness, witchcraft and death. One day the sun and the moon had a palaver and got very angry at each other. The palaver, as usual, began by each one claiming to be older than the other.

The moon said : " Who are you ? You are nobody, for you are alone and have no family. My equal ? Indeed ! Look at these countless stars. They are all my people ; but you are alone."

The sun replied : Oh, Moon, mother of darkness and of witchcraft ! I would have as many people as you if you had not killed them all. But now I have taken the people of the world, men, women and children, to be my family ; and I love them all."

XII

FETISHES

THE Fang, like other tribes of West Africa, have a name for God and they conceive that He is a personal being, who made the heavens and the earth, and created man. The one thing that they will say of God and the only fixed idea regarding Him is that He made everything. The world, even in the mind of the African, is an effect which demands a cause; and that cause is God. But since they have no conception of God's eternity, by the same principle of causality they must account for God Himself. So God has a father and a grandfather. This notion of a divine ancestry is evidently an effort of the mind to grope its way back to a First Cause.

They do not fear God, and they certainly do not love or reverence Him. Nor do I know that they ever worship Him. The transient observer among them sees wooden images, evidently objects of worship, and supposes that they are images of God; but in most cases, if not in all, these are images of ancestors or imaginary personages. He figures in some of their fables; but His deeds are usually wanton, wicked, or immoral. Most of these fables would not bear repetition. God is simply a magnified African chief with a great number of wives, most of whom have been stolen in the first instance. God takes no interest in the world that He has made. He looks down with indifference upon all its cruelty, its sorrow, and its sin. If He interferes in human affairs it

is perhaps to make mischief, or to confuse and distress men and women for His amusement. The most that the natives desire of God is that He will let them alone, and to this end they let Him alone.

Our teaching at this point is radical. They are surprised to learn that God always does right; that He loves right and hates wrong; that He loves them as a father loves his children; that their sins grieve Him and that He will punish their cruelties. We divest the character of God of all that is filthy and wicked, and teach them that God is such a one as Jesus was while on earth, even as He said to Philip: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." To them it is an entirely new conception.

Their belief in a future life is very clear, although there are individuals who will deny it. Their belief finds strong support in dreams. The African believes in dreams as actual occurrences, and they relate them one to another with great earnestness, which perhaps tends to make them more vivid and possibly more frequent. But no dreams are more common and none more vivid than those in which friends and loved ones appear who have recently died. Those who hold to the evolution of all our ideas from natural antecedents have in the dream as regarded by primitive people a plausible origin for the belief in a future life.

There were two Mpongwe women of Gaboon, Tito and Lucy, whom I used to invite regularly every Saturday to come to my Bible-class on Sunday morning. They were as regular in not coming as I was in inviting them, although they invariably promised to come and their parting salutation was usually: "Well, good-bye, till to-morrow morning." The truth is that Tito and Lucy were not Bible-class women. They had been taught in our mission school in the early days before the French government forbade the use of English; so they both

spoke English fairly well. Luey was sometimes called the Mpongwe queen, for she was head of the family that had ruled the entire tribe in former days. She became a victim of rum, which sent her to an untimely grave. Her family told me that during the last two years of her life it was doubtful whether she was ever sober. Tito had been the mistress of several white men in succession, who had either died or had gone home never to return, and as a result of her career had acquired heaps of clothes, a miscellaneous assortment of jewelry from glass to gold, and an awful temper.

At length one Sunday morning who should come to my Bible-class but Tito and Luey!—half an hour before the time. I felt something must have happened, and probably something wrong. For I knew that my invitation had not brought them; still less their promise. That same afternoon I was passing through their town and I stopped to ask them why in the world they had come to Bible-class. Then Tito explained that she had not had any intention of coming and that she had promised me just because “it be proper fashion to say Yes, more than No,” but on Saturday night she had a dream in which an angel had appeared to her or at least had spoken to her from the next room and had told her that she and Luey “must go to-morrow to Mr. Milligan’s Bible-class.” In the morning she told Luey the dream and they both decided at once that they would come to the class. Without scruple they could disobey from week to week the mandate of normal conscience, and the moral law of truth, but they rendered absolute obedience to the invalid experience of a dream. Afterwards, however, Tito became a regular attendant and finally she was received into the Gaboon Church and became a faithful Christian. She was by nature generous and she was especially skillful and kind in caring for the sick.

Another woman, Ayenwa, lived in Tito's town, who had been educated in the mission school but was now living as the mistress of a white man. Ayenwa was a good-looking woman and she had the soft, pleasant voice that is characteristic of the cultivated Mpongwe woman and distinguishes her from other African women. I had talked to Ayenwa more than once and had remonstrated with her in regard to the life she was living. But although she was troubled about it, she had made no change. At length a brother of hers died, and she was greatly afflicted by his death. He was a devout Christian, and before he died he had pleaded with Ayenwa to abandon her present way of living. Much as she loved him she did not yield to his desire and counsel. But not long after his death she came to me and said that she had left the white man and had renounced forever that kind of life; although she was friendless since her brother's death and did not know how she would get a living. It was owing to a dream.

She told me very earnestly and in beautiful language how that she had seen her brother in a dream. She had seen him in a forest, but the forest was very beautiful and it was like a great church. He smiled when he saw her and he called her by her name. She cried when she saw him and she told him how she missed him. He told her not to weep for he was very happy and was never sick any more. But he told her to remember his dying words to her, and so to live that when she died she would come to him and then they would never be separated any more. For several days the dream was always in her mind. Then she resolved that at any cost she would forsake evil and do right. And surely God would take care of her.

Ancestor-worship is the highest form of African fetishism, and it is only called fetishism because the ancestor's

skull or other part of the body is the medium of communication. In general it indicates reverence towards age; and this is a striking characteristic of the African. Yet I have known of an instance where an old woman was afraid that her son would kill her in order to procure the help and favour which she could render him after death. It is quite likely that such things really happen. At any rate love is not the apparent motive in ancestor-worship; it is simply the hope of gain by obtaining their favour.

The usual fetish of ancestor-worship is the skull of the father, which the son keeps in a box. The father occasionally speaks to the son in dreams and frequently communicates with him by omens. He helps him in all his enterprises, good and evil, and secures his success in love, in hunting and in war. All those who have these skulls are a secret society, which, as I have said, is powerful to rule and to tyrannize over others.

Young boys are initiated into this society by rites and ceremonies that are revolting. The initiation varies widely in different tribes and even in the same town there is no uniform ceremony. No white man could ever witness the ceremony, and there are very few natives that would tell him all about it. But a general idea he may get from some; and single details from others at different times. In the mild ceremony of the more civilized Fang towns, the boy who is to be initiated is made very drunk and taken blindfolded to the bush, to a place set apart for the use of the society. The ceremony continues several days. In one part of it the bandage is removed from his eyes at midnight, a low fire is burning which gives a feeble light, and he finds himself surrounded by the members of the society with faces and bodies frightfully distorted and all the skulls of their ancestors exposed to view, together with the heads of persons who

have recently died. Some one asks him what he sees. He replies that he sees only spirits and solemnly declares that these are not men.

Boys are often initiated against their will. One of my schoolboys, a handsome lad of about fifteen, during a vacation was initiated and died before it was over. It is his initiation that I have just described—at least the very small part of it that I was able to find out. His death made them more unwilling to tell me. His initiation lasted several days during which he was compelled to remain in the bush. Further up the river a boy, during the initiation, is usually placed for several days in a house alone, after being made to look at the sun so long that sometimes he faints, and when he is taken into the house he cannot at first see anything. Meantime the door is closed and they all go away. Gradually he sees things around him and at length discovers opposite him a corpse, in an early stage of decomposition. He is kept there day and night during the ceremony. The men visit him and subject him to all sorts of indignities in order to impress him with the necessity of absolute obedience to the society. They defile him with filth, and that the vilest of filth. But I presume that the reader will gladly excuse me from any further description of this disgusting practice. One cannot omit all reference to such things if he would describe the African as he really is.

They believe that the skull of the father or other ancestor when it has been properly prepared becomes the residence of the ancestor, who, however, is not confined to it, but wanders about returning to it as to his home. The son, in order to avoid the wrath of the departed father, and to obtain his help, will keep the skull comfortably warm and dry, occasionally rubbing it with oil and red-wood powder, and will feed it bountifully. The

process of feeding it is interesting. The son before going on a hunting expedition will open the box, and addressing his father in audible words will ask his favour and will promise that in return for success he will give him a goodly portion of the game. If he should neglect this duty for a length of time he may find when he meets an animal in the forest that his gun will not fire, and he may even find himself helpless before his enemies. The white man knowing the kind of guns they use, does not think it necessary to go so far for an explanation of the fact that they often fail in a critical moment. When the son returns with game he will again open the box and place the meat before the skull. Then he will close the house against all possibility of intrusion and he himself will go away while the father eats. After a while he comes back, and although he finds the meat exactly as he left it, he supposes that in some mysterious way his father has eaten it and yet left it, that is, has eaten the spirit of it. He then eats it himself, sharing it also with the men of the society. But since it has been offered to the dead father it is now sacred, and he cannot allow his wife or children to taste it under any circumstances. The men, being of a religious turn of mind, offer to the father, all, or nearly all, the game they procure, and if women and children are left hungry they can at least admire the fervent piety of husbands and fathers.

It is only the skulls of men, not of women, that are used by the Secret Society. But the spirits of women return after death, like those of men, and frequently become very troublesome. On Corisco Island there lives a man who has been in contact with civilization all his lifetime and is fairly educated though he is not a Christian. His wife died ; and shortly afterwards she began playing pranks in his town and even in his house. She broke nearly all his dishes. Then, one night, she struck him in

the neck, and he instantly recognized her. His neck was stiff in the morning. That proved it ! Not being able to strike back in this unequal warfare and preferring an enemy whom he could kick (for this individual wore shoes and scarcely anything else) he lost spirit and finally pulled down the entire town and built in another place. Women and children never possess the skulls of ancestors. The power of the ancestor is more often used against women than others. Among the Mpongwe and some other tribes a woman may worship her ancestors ; for which purpose she uses not skulls but wooden images, which she never exhibits.

The African conception of nature may be inferred from what we have said of their view of God and their worship of ancestors. God having made the world seems to take no more interest in it. Other spirits innumerable control it and continually interfere with its normal operations. Since there is no single intelligence ever present and presiding it follows that there is no uniformity in nature and no reign of law. Those phenomena which attract the African's attention he ascribes immediately to a supernatural cause. He does not look for a natural cause. If a tree falls across his path, somebody threw it. The activity of spirits accounts for everything. There is no line between nature and the supernatural ; miracles are always happening. The causes of natural phenomena being supernatural are also inscrutable. The study of nature and the investigation of her laws is precluded by this conception.

If then we would understand the African, if we would distinguish between his mentality and a state of imbecility, we must bear in mind that, since according to his conception innumerable spirits at variance with each other preside over nature, uniformity, constancy and dependability are not to be expected. The rainbow, he

says, is a serpent, which has the power of making itself visible or invisible at will. If a mountain disappear behind the clouds he has no difficulty in believing that a spirit who inhabits the mountain has removed it, and that he brings it back when the sun shines. The white man who does not accept this explanation and demands a natural and knowable cause does not thereby manifest a knowledge of nature but an ignorance of spirits. The canoe which carries him safely to-day may lose its buoyancy and sink beneath the waves to-morrow. In some of their fables, at the utterance of a magic word a ship may sink, a house may fall, a man be reduced to physical and mental impotence; and such fables are scarcely distinguishable from fact in his conception. At their first contact with the white man they suppose that the beads, cloth and other goods which he displays are made by himself, by some magic process, as easy when known as the utterance of a word; and they suppose that we could without effort make them as rich as ourselves. If a house or a town should burn down there is little use in looking for the cause, as it may have been set on fire by some ancestor who is angry at being neglected.

When Du Chaillu visited a certain town in which the people had never before seen a white man, regarding him as a spirit, they all declared that a great rock near the town had been moved by him and was not in the same place it had been before. This inspired them with dread. But when the smallpox broke out among them and the scourge followed him with the persistency of fate, there was no doubt in their minds but that he had caused it; and meanwhile they made not the slightest effort to protect themselves against the contagion. They regarded him with increasing fear and hostility until at last his journey came to a disastrous end. He and his party turned and fled while the natives pursued with poisoned

arrows. But they soon desisted from the pursuit ; for, they declared, their arrows rebounded harmless from his body, and sometimes even passed through him and did him no injury. In all this let it not be supposed for a moment that the native is a fool. He is true to his philosophy of nature : but his philosophy is wrong. He knows nothing of the doctrine of God,—of one Intelligence presiding over all nature, and that natural laws are therefore persistent and uniform.

But to the native chaotic conception of nature we must add another idea of fearful import. To the mind of the African nature presents a frowning aspect, from which he naturally infers that the spirits which rule or reside within it are mostly hostile to him. It is only to the reflecting mind that nature seems beneficent. Her greatest forces, her constant ministry, are not obvious. That which is normal and regular does not attract attention. A man thinks more of the one month of sickness than the eleven months of health ; he is more observant of the storm than of sunshine, more conscious of adversity than prosperity. The laws of growth, seed-time and harvest, rain and sunshine—all the kindly ministry of nature is quiet and unobtrusive, while her cruelty thrusts itself upon the attention because it is her unaccustomed mood. The conception of nature in the African mind is derived from the devastating tornado and the storm upon the sea that threatens to engulf him, from the hard work necessary to procure his food and the scarcity of meat, from sickness that disables him and death that bereaves him of his friends. It is therefore a part of his philosophy that the spirits are at enmity with him. His own ancestors are among them and they may be placated and even rendered favourable, but a far greater number are hostile ; and the motive of his worship is not devotion but fear. He worships the spirits of his an-

cestors that he may obtain their help against all other spirits.

Contrary to all this Jesus teaches him to call God, Father ; and God's Fatherhood includes His care, which at once relates God to nature, for it is largely through nature that God's care is exercised. To believe in God's care over us is to believe that nature's laws are the operation of His will. The mind awakens to the beneficence of nature, and we learn that even storm, disease and death are under the control of a sympathetic Power. The fear of the native is changed to confidence and trust.

Next to the ancestral relic is a lower form of fetishism in which the external object is the vessel or residence of a spirit, which is under the control of the possessor of the object. A still lower form of fetishism is pure animism, in which the various objects of nature have each a life analogous to that of man to which their phenomena are due. Witchcraft is a supernatural power obtained by a person through a compact with an evil spirit. In Africa witchcraft is also fetishism inasmuch as it is usually, and perhaps always, supposed that there is within the witch's body a physical object which is the residence of the evil spirit.

The skull or other relic of the ancestor differs from the common fetish in that the possessor of the former cannot compel the ancestor to do his will ; he can only persuade him, or induce his help and favour by offerings and kind treatment. But the possessor of the common fetish does not make offerings to it ; the fetish is under his control and he can compel the spirit within it to serve him. If it should disobey him he will punish it. The usual punishment is to hang it in smoke. Fetishes have a horror of smoke. I do not know that the native ever punishes his ancestor for refusing a favour. If he should leave the skull in a cold or wet place, or should neglect offerings of

food, the ancestor will suffer discomfort, but the discomfort is slight compared with the evil that he will send upon his undutiful son as a punishment for such neglect.

In the proper fetish (if the word fetish be restricted in its meaning) the spirit resides within the object but is not a part of it, and may leave it, the fetish being then of no more use. A still lower form of fetish, implying animism, is that in which the spirit of the fetish is its own life, and is related to it as the soul to the body. This latter fetish however is different from a mere amulet or charm; for the charm operates not by any intelligence within itself but by some sympathetic influence without. Such, for instance, is the horseshoe which the negro in our South hangs over his door for luck. The charm, the fetish, and the relic represent ascending grades of belief. But they are all confused in the mind of the African, just as we confuse them under the one term *fetichism*.

As long as we live in Africa, however, we do not often speak of fetishes, but of *medicines*: for this is in strict accord with native usage. The native calls his fetishes medicines, and his medicines fetishes, and in his mind there is no difference. The remedial power of medicine is supernatural, due either to magic or to a spirit residing within it. Upon swallowing the medicine, the spirit of the medicine, like a policeman, chases through the body after the spirit of the disease until it strangles it or drives it out. Of course the white man's medicines are fetishes also.

The following story (although I do not vouch for its truth) illustrates very well the magical operation of medicine. A certain chief, it is said, induced a German trader to order for him a chest of medicines prepared in Germany. The bottles of medicine are all numbered and the chest is accompanied by a book of directions, competent for the diagnosis of any particular case. Every

liable symptom and combination of symptoms is recorded together with the prescription for each. The prescription refers to the bottles by their numbers. One day the chief fell sick. He found his symptoms accurately described in the book, followed by the direction to take one spoonful of No. 15. The bottle of that particular number was missing; so he took one spoonful of No. 7 and one of No. 8. But the result was so alarming that as soon as he was sufficiently recovered from the shock he consigned the chest to the spirit of the deep sea with the hope that it might do Neptune more good than it had done him; and to this end he was careful to send the book of directions with it.

There is a large class of fetishes in which the ancestor is the agent. If a man is expecting to ask a favour of another he will be sure of a generous compliance if he scrape the skull of his ancestor and succeed in putting a little of the powder into the other man's food. Du Chaillu was highly incensed when he found that this was the explanation of a certain chief's generosity who had been feeding him lavishly for several days.

A man walking in the forest usually carries suspended from his neck a medicine, contained in a goat's horn, the effect of which is to make him invisible to an enemy if he should meet him in the path. He often carries another, somewhat similar, which will turn the bullets of an enemy's gun into water if the enemy should see him and shoot at him; or sometimes the bullets will pass through his body and do him no harm. He wears a band, a "kaga," about his neck, which tightens at the approach of danger. The explanation of the latter may be a physical fact, namely, that fear distends the cords of the neck so that the band would really be tighter. He carries another medicine in a horn which, if danger overtake him in the forest, or he should be in need of help, will whistle

in his town, however far away, and summon the people. It is obvious that several of these fetishes are quite superfluous if the others are to be relied upon. The native therefore does not fully trust his fetishes; and there is always the fear that some enemy may have a stronger fetish than his own. There are fetishes to protect a man against theft. One of these will cause a person who steals from its owner to "swell up and burst." Indeed there are a great many fetishes used for various purposes which have this same effect of causing persons to swell up and burst. Another fetish is kept in the box containing the owner's cloth, tobacco and other goods. If a thief should open the box this fetish will spring out and go right through him.

Before entering upon a war several days are sometimes spent in the preparation of war-medicine. The best fetish-doctors unite their skill in the preparation. It is medicine that makes the gun shoot straight; it is medicine that makes the bullets kill; it is medicine that makes a man fearless; it is medicine that makes cowards of the enemy. The French government brought into the Congo Français native soldiers of Senegal, armed with first-rate guns and skilled in the use of them. The Fang were of course eager to know the secret of their powerful gun-medicine. Two of the soldiers who were in personal contact with the Fang sold them little tin boxes filled with mud, which they said was their gun-medicine. The two enterprising soldiers were "getting rich quick" when the government required their prompt attendance at the capital.

Some of the war-medicines are repulsive. On extreme occasions they will sprinkle upon the forth-going warriors an admixture of the decomposing brains of men recently deceased and the blood of fowls or of animals, with other disgusting ingredients. With this medicine besides

others which are suspended about his neck, the smell of such a hero would detract somewhat from the glamour of his exploits; and one can imagine, upon his return from the war, the people holding their noses and singing, "Lo, the Conquering Hero Comes."

There are other fetishes which are used more commonly to avenge private wrongs.

When a man cuts his hair or trims his beard, he carefully guards it and then burns it, lest a single hair should fall into the hands of an enemy. So he does with the cuttings of his nails. The possession of these would give an enemy power over him; for they are the common ingredients of a fetish-medicine. A piece of his clothing may also be used in this way. Such medicine, if buried before his doorway or placed beside the path where he will pass, even without coming in contact with him, will inflict sickness or disease, misfortune or death. Most of the evils that befall the native he attributes to the power of these hostile fetishes. Only the most devout and consecrated Christians are entirely freed from this superstition. Even in the Mpongwe Church of Gaboon, the oldest in the Mission, there are many cases of discipline for such beliefs.

There was one particular case that came up in some form at nearly every meeting of the session of the church for more than a year. A young woman, named Anuriguli, was married and a short time afterwards was received into the church. It was said by certain of the heathen that an envious woman of a town near by, who was also a member of the church, had made medicine to prevent Anuriguli from having children. For this is a great affliction and reproach to an African woman. Some half dozen families, men and women, became entangled in this quarrel, most of them however being heathen. The Christians among them were several times summoned

before the session of the church. Each told his story in his own way ; the native way is to begin as far back towards the creation of the world as their knowledge of history extends, and leave to the very last all reference to the matter in hand. There is a notable absence of embarrassment in such a discussion, even on the part of the women ; nor are they in the least forward ; in fact they are not self-conscious at all ; for no native ever hesitates for a word or experiences the slightest difficulty in expressing himself in appropriate language. Anuriguli declared she had never accused the other woman of making medicine against her. She had heard it from others, but she did not fear such medicines since she had become a Christian ; although if the woman had done so it would indicate a feeling of extreme hostility towards her however powerless her efforts might be, and this enmity was making her heart sore. The other woman declared her innocence, and that for years she had not believed in this superstition ; nor had she any hostile feelings that would prompt her to such a wicked action ; but she had heard that Anuriguli accused her, and the accusation was hurting both her feelings and her reputation ; and her heart was very sore, for the heathen had cast bitter reproaches upon her.

Having given much advice, but too little sympathy, I fear, I exacted a promise from each and all of them that they would stop talking about the matter, and I dismissed them ; for the session had endless work ahead of them, some of it more serious than this. The result was that it broke out afresh, and three months later they were all before the session again, when the matter was more complicated than at first. Three months later it again came before the session for the third time. Anuriguli's position had somewhat altered. She had heard that the other woman said that she said that the other woman said that

she said . . . that the other woman had made medicine to injure her ! And still there are those who assert that the African is not intellectually competent ! I did then what I wished I had done in the first place—gave them all the time they wanted and took time myself to realize that fetishism is a terrible reality in Africa, that public opinion recognizes it and can inflict as heavy penalties as anywhere else upon those who fall into disrepute ; for the African, because his social instincts are strong, is very sensitive regarding his reputation. A patient and sympathetic hearing ended the whole matter.

The ingredients of a fetish are usually objects associated with that which is desirable or that which is fearful—the strong, the swift, the gruesome, the repulsive, the mysterious and objects associated with death. The eagle's talon is commonly used, the wing feathers of any bird, the claw of the leopard, the teeth of all animals and their blood, dried bits of their flesh and their offal. When Shakespeare describes the contents of the witches' caldron and their invocation of trouble, one might think that he had been a missionary to the Fang.

“Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the caldron boil and bake ;
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg and howlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.”

“Double, double toil and trouble ;
Fire burn and caldron bubble.”

When the fetish is not merely for protection, but is intended to injure a particular person, it must include such personal ingredients as the cuttings of the hair or nails of that person, or a shred of his clothing.

Fetishism and witchcraft inevitably go together. A witch is in league with an evil spirit by which she can leave the body, and return to it, for her spirit is "loose from her body." She "eats" the spirit, or life, of her enemies, and all people are her enemies, innocent or guilty alike. She is sold to evil. The African does not regard the spirit or soul of a person as immaterial. It is a thin vaporous material which resembles the body in form and appearance. This is perhaps everywhere the conception that underlies the belief in ghosts. Primitive people generally associate this spirit with the shadow, and sometimes with the breath. The African believes that a man may lose his shadow. Soon afterwards he will die. An enemy may also injure it. Many an African has sought to kill another by driving a nail into his shadow. A man's shadow is big in the morning because it is fresh and strong. It shrivels up with the heat of the sun. It is evident that the sun afflicts it for it always keeps on the cooler side, away from the sun.

Many tribes—whether all tribes I cannot say—believe that a person has several spirits. It is always the spirit that gets sick, and any one of a man's spirits may get sick, or may leave him. In the latter case a skillful doctor will be able to catch the spirit and put it back in the man. Madness is always imputed to a malignant spirit inhabiting a man's body; such a spirit may be born with the man.

Their chief fetishes, however, are for protection against witches. In many houses, immediately inside the door there hangs a fetish which at night builds a fire around the sleeping inmate, a fire invisible to all others but witches, and through which no witch can pass. Another has the power to change the bamboo cabin into a house of stone, through which witches cannot pass. It retains the appearance of bamboo in every respect, and one can

see the light between the pieces, but in reality it is solid stone, with no openings at all, not even for the door. We are reminded of another miracle whereby bread is changed into something which is not bread, the change being non-apparent since it takes place not in the accidents but in the essence of the material. So, the bamboo is transubstantiated into stone.

One is sometimes mentally staggered and feels that he is losing his hold on reality by the stories of Africans recounting their own experiences and what their eyes have seen, stories told soberly and with every evidence of sincerity. A man tells how that while his wife's body was in her bed he looked out into the street and saw her spirit form, with that of others whom he recognized, armed with knives and cutting up the form of a person and eating it. The victim whose life they have eaten sickens soon afterwards and dies a lingering death.

One day walking along the Batanga beach with a fellow missionary, we passed a large, flat rock almost submerged beneath the rising tide, which recalled to my companion the following story. Some years ago at Batanga there lived a man who had long suspected his wife of witchcraft. One night he had occasion to speak to her, but she did not answer. He tried to rouse her from sleep, but could not. He concluded that she was away on some witch errand leaving her body behind her, as witches do. He himself had some knowledge of witchcraft though he employed this knowledge only in self-defense. He anointed her body with red pepper. Witches abhor red pepper; and they cannot reënter a body thus anointed. Towards morning the woman returned to her body only to find that she was undone; groans and sighs told her distress to the ear of the husband who lay quiet as if asleep. She lingered until the day began to dawn. Now, witches are afraid of light even more than

of pepper. She retired and hid herself near the house to await the next night. Meantime, the husband related the whole story to the assembled people, and they accepted it nothing doubting. They resolved to burn the body immediately. They dragged it through the street to the beach in the sight of her own family and her children, amidst execrations and insults, and burned it on the rock while the tide was low, and soon afterwards the rising waves swept the ashes into the sea.

The Africans do not say of a woman that she *is* a witch, but that she *has* a witch. She commits witchcraft by means of the witch which she possesses. And since everything has a material body of some kind, the witch can be found within the woman. Often a witch rebels against its possessor and "eats" her. This is the frequent explanation of convulsions, and a convulsion is enough to bring suspicion and a charge of witchcraft against a woman. A sure way to find out the truth of the matter and relieve the strain of suspense is to kill the woman, open the body and make a conscientious and impartial investigation. In this manner, executing the sentence first and afterwards finding a verdict of "guilty" or "not guilty," the verdict is more likely to be just, while they also avoid a prolonged and scandalous trial, and evince a delicate regard for the woman's reputation. Any odd thing that they may find in the body not consistent with their ideas of anatomical propriety is identified as the witch.

Sometimes a hen is set on eggs and the accused person is pronounced guilty, or not guilty, according as the greater number of chickens hatched are male or female. But this kind of ordeal is more common in deciding cases of adultery. More commonly in the case of witchcraft a certain mild poison is administered to the accused in a drink. Sometimes she vomits it, or it passes with-

out any serious effect. But if she becomes dizzy and staggers, they instantly leap upon her with knives and kill her. There seems to be no such thing in the African opinion as a natural death. All deaths that we call natural are imputed to witchcraft. As soon as the cry of witchcraft is raised, the people, panic-stricken with fear, are transformed to ferocious demons. With wild eyes they rush up and down the street in a body crying out for blood. This is the opportunity of the witch-doctor, either to levy blackmail, or to rid himself of his enemies. When a woman is accused by him, no matter in what esteem she may have been held hitherto, and regardless of her family connections, the people turn upon her in cruel rage and can scarce wait for the ordeal. Such scenes, and the violent death following are very common among them ; yet the white man rarely witnesses anything of the kind. They are altogether different when he is present.

One of our missionaries has told me how that, in the early days, on Corisco Island, he once saw a condemned woman, one whom he knew, taken out to sea in a boat. A short distance from the shore they cut her throat and flung her into the sea. Meanwhile, behind a rock which hid them from his view, they burned at the stake the condemned woman's son, a young boy, lest growing up he should avenge his mother's death. Their motive in inflicting such a horrible death upon an innocent boy was probably to disable his spirit and prevent it from returning to trouble them.

A man's wives are the first to be suspected of having caused his death, as they are usually supposed to have a latent desire for it. As a matter of fact they are very skillful in the use of the deadly poisons which abound in Africa, and which they often administer in food. Much of the witchcraft in Africa is straight poison. A native

offering you drink or food always tastes it first himself in your presence to show that it is not poisoned. It is an unsavoury custom, but it is wise to observe it strictly. The use of poison is a peculiarly unpleasant habit on the part of a wife since she has a constant opportunity. Slaves also, and sometimes white men's servants, contract this same habit. Truly, life in Africa, in its every aspect, is a fight with death. It is possible, as some say, that the practice of killing wives at the death of their husbands has this origin; in any case it serves to restrict the use of poison and to induce wives to try to keep their husbands alive.

Wives accused of having caused the death of a husband by witchcraft, are often buried alive with his dead body. A Bulu chief near Efulen died leaving seven wives. They were charged with having bewitched him and were about to be buried alive with him when Dr. Good reached the town and saved their lives. A very large grave was already dug in the street and the body was laid in the middle. The women lay naked and trembling upon the ground. But the people would not perform the atrocious deed in the presence of the white man. Dr. Good stayed in the town even against their protest, and would not leave it until they had filled the grave, and he knew that the women were safe. In one of the Bulu towns, ten women, wives of one husband, were buried alive with the body of the husband. In another town twenty women were buried thus with the body of the husband. A large grave was dug and the body placed in the middle; the women's legs were broken with clubs and then they were flung into the grave.

The belief in witchcraft has been more prolific of cruelty than any other in the history of the world. It dehumanizes men with fear. The story of the power which a remnant belief in witchcraft has exercised in

civilized and even Christian communities is the darkest page in their history, and we will need to remember that in Africa there is no restraint of civilization and no light of Christianity. I am always afraid that the depiction of the diabolical cruelty incident to the belief in witchcraft may cause the civilized to recoil from the African as if he were less than human, and hopelessly brutal. It is therefore well that we should insistently remember the facts of history and the slow emancipation of civilization from this same belief with its horror of cruelty. Between the promulgation of the bull of Pope Innocent VIII against sorcery, in 1484, and the last judicial execution for witchcraft, in 1782, it is estimated that 300,000 women perished in Europe on this charge. The last execution in England was that of Mrs. Hickes and her nine-year-old daughter, in 1716.

Since a particular incident makes a more adequate impression than a general statement, I quote entire a brief story told by Froude in one of his historical essays, *The Influence of the Reformation on the Scottish Character*, which he takes from the official report of the proceedings in the case :

“Towards the end of 1593 there was trouble in the family of the Earl of Orkney. His brother laid a plot to murder him, and was said to have sought the help of a ‘notorious witch,’ Alison Balfour. When Alison Balfour’s life was looked into, no evidence could be found connecting her either with the particular offense or with witchcraft in general ; but it was enough in these matters to be accused. She swore she was innocent ; but her guilt was only held to be aggravated by perjury. She was tortured again and again. Her legs were put in caschilaws—an iron frame which was gradually heated till it burned into the flesh—but no confession could be wrung from her. The caschilaws failed utterly, and

something else had to be tried. She had a husband, a son, and a daughter, a child seven years old. As her own sufferings did not work upon her, she might be touched, perhaps, by the sufferings of those who were dear to her. They were brought into court and placed at her side; and the husband first was placed in the 'lang irons'—some accursed, I know not what. Still the devil did not yield. She bore this; and her son was next operated on. The boy's legs were set in 'the boot'—the iron boot you may have heard of. The wedges were driven in, which, when forced home, crushed the very bone and marrow. Fifty-seven mallet strokes were delivered upon the wedges. Yet this, too, failed. There was no confession yet. So, last of all, the little daughter was taken. There was a machine called the piniwinkies,—a kind of thumb-screw, which brought blood from under the finger-nails, with a pain successfully terrible. These things were applied to the poor child's hands, and the mother's constancy broke down, and she said she would admit anything they wished. She confessed her witchcraft—so tried, she would have confessed to the seven deadly sins—and then she was burned, recalling her confession, and with her last breath protesting her innocence."

We civilized folk have a way of forgetting our own history, and the pit from which we have been digged.

XIII

A BOAT CREW

THE following is the beginning of a letter written to a circle of friends in America while I was in Africa.

“Seated within the open door of my study I look down the hillside, through a vista of gorgeous oleander and orange trees, of graceful, waving palms and the soft cascade foliage of the bamboo tossing and tumbling in the breeze, to the blue expanse where the Gaboon rolls out to the boundless ocean. The early afternoon is quiet, and the hazy atmosphere, peculiar to Africa, blends together in gentle harmony things most diverse in form and colour. But there is one object to which the mind and eye turn back yet again, and which by associations variously tender, pathetic, or amusing, lead memory off for a while to wander in the dreamy mazes of the past. It is the mission boat *Evangeline*, which lies at anchor on the bay, rising and falling with the successive waves. The *Evangeline* came to Africa many years ago. Some of those who commanded her are now infirm with age, and the voices of some are heard on earth no more. Her special work has always been that of itinerating,—carrying the Gospel of light and peace to those who sit in darkness and sorrow, by many waters. Like her namesake, the lonely maiden of Acadia, she has followed the rivers of a strange land and streams unknown that wind and wander through ‘forests primeval.’

“The *Evangeline* is a gig, twenty-two feet long, having four oars and requiring four oarsmen. Her lines are per-

fect, and for her size she is a remarkably fine sailing-boat, riding a rough sea with a steadiness and lightness that have drawn praise from old seamen. Before the strong sea-breeze she seems fairly animate and impelled by motive and purpose as she spreads her wings to the wind and speeds forward on her errand of mercy. I can think also of sultry days when her sails hung loose and heavy through the whole day while tired men pulled wearily at the oars, whistling vainly for the wind, which ever 'bloweth where it listeth.' I can think of toils long and hard when we wound wearily through mangrove swamps, by fetid banks, under the relentless heat of a tropical sun. But these experiences belong to the past and I can forget them now. For it is one of the touching frailties of human nature that as the past recedes into the obscure distance we magnify its fond and pleasant memories and forget the evils that we no longer feel.

"My long journeys in the *Evangeline* are probably past ; for a naphtha launch, the *Dorothy*, has arrived, dispensing with the toil of oars and the aid of the fickle wind, perfectly protected from sun and rain and fitted with every comfort for day and night. But the *Evangeline*, though her name designates her as feminine, belongs to the ordained clergy of the Presbyterian Church and has not yet passed the dead-line. We will find for her some field in which a few years longer she may exercise her talents.

"This afternoon as I look at her I seem to see the faces of faithful boat-boys who journeyed with me by day and by night, and my mind is filled with recollections of experiences and incidents by the way. There are none in Africa whom I know better than those boat-boys ; and through them I probably know all Africans better and love them more. For when sails are set before a good wind and the bow tosses the waves aside, the music of the plashing water, the mutual dependence and isolation

from others,—the delight of it all makes social freedom and comradeship peculiar to such life ; and again, when they toil at the oars hour after hour without complaint, sympathy breaks down all barriers. If you should laugh at these boys let your laughter be sympathetic ; they are worthy of sympathy. Life is so hard for the African, so bare and comfortless ! And when he would fain seek the road to the Better Land so many forces conspire against him that, apart for our faith in God and the love of God, one might think that the world around him was contrived for his defeat. In this dark land one catches only an occasional glimpse of the all-ruling and kindly Providence in which we believe. It would seem rather that the fabled goddess of fortune, blind and turning her wheel in the darkness, dispenses at random the destinies of men.”

The captain of the *Evangeline* was Makuba, a man of Benito, one hundred miles north, one of the Kombi tribe, the remnant of a proud and capable people who for many years have been in contact with the civilization of the coast. The Kombi know the sea and are excellent boatmen, strong and daring. In travelling in their own canoes even on the sea, they commonly stand up in the canoe, using long paddles. When there are five or six men in the canoe, or the sea is rough, it is interesting to watch them. Makuba was a man of splendid physique and very strong, and as bold as a lion. Shortly after I went to Africa, when for a while I lived entirely alone, at Angom Station, seventy miles up the Gaboon River, a serious palaver occurred in which Makuba took a prominent part.

The Fang of the adjacent village stole some goods from him. He and several other workmen, being coast men, were regarded by the interior Fang as natural enemies. I was morally responsible for the safety of these coast men and I regarded myself as responsible also for the stolen

goods. Moreover there was a mission store at that station and the sight of our goods was a continual challenge to the passionate greed of the Fang, who therefore must not be allowed to think that they could steal anything from the premises with impunity. Indeed, our very reputation and evangelistic success were involved; for it was plain that the Fang had been mistaking forbearance for cowardice, and in their esteem there is nothing so contemptible as a coward.

On this occasion I followed strictly the native mode of obtaining justice, and that which the native, with his idea of the solidarity of a community, recognizes as fair. A few minutes after the theft a man from the same town to which the thief belonged passed through the mission premises. I gave the order to the workmen to capture him and take his gun. Makuba, without assistance, executed the order. The man fought him violently, but being overcome was at length reduced to cursing him and predicting the various horrible deaths by which he would die, not to speak of everlasting torment that would be sure to follow. The indignant Makuba in reply tore open the front of his shirt and exposed an ugly scar upon his breast.

"Am I afraid of the Fang?" he cried. "Do you see that scar? A Fang knife did that in an attack upon my tribe, and I alone killed the man who carried it and two of his friends."

I then took charge of the gun and told the man that I would return it as soon as his people would bring me the stolen goods, and then I released him.

An hour later some thirty or forty very angry men, armed with knives and guns, and shouting their war-cry, rushed into the yard. They did not yet realize that I was going to take up the palaver, but thought they had only to deal with the workmen, who were unarmed.



MAKUBA, CAPTAIN OF THE BOAT CREW

*In a tornado his chief anxiety was always for the white man, that
he might not get wet, and it was a part of politeness
not to protect himself*

Their intention was to kill Makuba and take the gun, which they supposed was in his possession. They ran past the end of my house towards the workmen's house shouting the name of Makuba. But it chanced that he was at the other end of my house, so they missed him. Immediately returning they saw him but before they reached him I pushed him into the house and closing the door myself confronted them and addressed them from the porch, explaining that since Makuba was in my employ I was bound to protect him ; that the palaver was therefore mine, and they would have to fight me first. They first demanded that Makuba be delivered to them, but at length proposed to accept the gun as a compromise. I of course declined the compromise and demanded the stolen goods for the gun.

Finally one of them raised the cry : " Let us kill the white man and take the store."

This may have been a mere bluff. I am disposed to think that it was ; but I did not think so that day, and one cannot be sure. It was in a Fang town much nearer to the coast and to the French government that Mr. Marling was once robbed of his very clothing and left naked in the street of the village.

The idea of killing the white man for the goods in the store became uncomfortably popular. They recounted all the grievous wrongs they had suffered at the hands of white men, and missionaries in particular, from the discovery of Africa down to the present moment. They had at various times respectfully advised that the church be closed and the store kept open all the time, and had been told in reply that the church was more important than the store, and that preaching the Gospel was our chief work. They had come to buy goods and had found the store closed and the missionaries holding prayers with the people. They had advised that we

must sell goods only to them and not to their enemies and had been told that we loved their enemies. They had advised that we lower our prices on all articles except those that they did not want and we had seen fit to fix our own prices regardless of their feelings. They had frequently come to the station to beg a little present and the missionaries had affronted them by offering them work. They had requested tobacco of this present white man and in reply he had invited them to Sunday-school.

The situation had become intolerable and they proposed to recompense full vengeance upon the aforesaid white man. The older men, however, advised that if they should attack the white man and the mission it ought not to be done by one town, but that all the adjacent towns ought to be engaged in it so as to spread the responsibility. This advice prevailed and they decided upon an attack that night, and sent messengers to two large towns some distance in the forest, telling them to come armed for an attack on the mission. I did not suppose at the time that we had a single weapon of defense except the old gun that we had captured. It was already loaded, but as far as I knew we had no ammunition. I immediately set out to search the premises, and to my great joy found a rifle, which had accidentally been left there. We found plenty of ammunition both for the rifle and the gun which we had seized. I also ordered the men to catch any native that might come near the premises and to take his gun. They were greatly surprised when they heard the report of the rifle and immediately recognized it as "a white man's gun," of which they have a wholesome dread, believing also that the white man has medicine which will make his gun shoot straight and absolutely sure. I was very careful to conceal the fact that I had only one rifle, and they were quite deceived, supposing that I had a sufficient

number for all of us. They dispatched messengers a second time to the forest towns to tell them of our preparations. They all came together that night armed for war, and shots were fired continually during the night, but no attack was made. When I afterwards learned how prone they are to experimentation with a new comer, I realized that it might have been a mere bluff. No one can tell ; but I had no such thought at the time. Neither did Makuba nor any of the workmen regard it as a bluff.

All the workmen excepting Makuba besought me to give back the captured gun and stop the palaver. I brought them into my house that night ; but Makuba with the rifle in his hand insisted upon keeping watch, and walked before my door the whole night. The matter of his stolen goods and his personal danger were quite forgotten in absorbing anxiety for the white man's safety. I may add that I cut off all communication with the people, refusing to buy their supplies of food, or to open the store, until after several days they returned the stolen goods, and the palaver was finished.

A short time after this I made Makuba the captain of the boat crew. He knew the sea, and everything about boats and was perfectly trustworthy. But these qualifications are more common in Africa than the faculty of discipline and command which is by no means common. Makuba was not altogether wanting in talent for discipline, but when this proved insufficient he procured obedience to his orders by diplomacy and argument ; and for that matter, the greatest sea-captain dispenses with argument only because he is given authority to punish and to put in irons, which requires no talent at all.

But all Makuba's resources of discipline and diplomacy were taxed when I hired Obianga, a young man of the Fang, whose home was near Angom. Poor Obianga is

dead ; and I would not make cheap jokes at his expense. He was like a wild unbroken colt, full of life, willing to work, and not lazy, but resentful of the bit and reins of authority. For any man, especially one of another tribe, to give him an order was equivalent to calling him a slave ; and, representative of his tribe, he seemed ever to be saying : " We were never in bondage to any man."

When Makuba would shout an order to him, however urgent, even if a tempest were approaching, Obianga would perhaps tell him to " shut up." Then we usually improvised a little tempest on our own account, Makuba's indignation being the turbulent factor. But in milder weather he would try persuasion and various expedients, old and new, always prevailing in the end.

I never interfered in these altercations, though I sometimes reckoned with the offender when the journey was over. More than once Makuba asked me to dismiss Obianga, but I would not ; for I liked him and felt that there was in him the raw material for an excellent man. Then, too, I remembered that I once dismissed another man upon Makuba's urgent and repeated request, and no sooner did Makuba hear of it than he came to me begging me to take the man on again, saying that he himself had been too impatient, reminding me also that the man had a wife and child, and promising that if I would take him back he would not complain of him again. Of course I took him back ; and Makuba kept his word.

The worst disputes between Obianga and Makuba took place when they supposed that I was asleep. The native when he lies down anywhere sleeps immediately. Whenever I was lying in the bottom of the boat they always supposed that I was asleep and that no conceivable noise could waken me. During one of their quarrels Makuba, with a voice like a thunderbolt, roars : " If you don't do

what I say I will tell Mr. Milligan that you have two wives."

"Sh—sh! Makuba," says Obianga. "What did you tell me to do?"

Such altercations as the following were not uncommon: Captain Makuba orders Obianga to "haul away on the peak halliards"; to which Obianga promptly replies:

"Do it yourself."

"I won't do it: you will do it," says Makuba in a threatening tone.

"Are you my father?" says Obianga.

"No," answers Makuba with infinite scorn. "How could a Kombi man be the father of an animal like you?"

"Then stop giving me orders," says Obianga with rising wrath. "It is not the first time you have tried it, and one of these days you will find out that it won't do."

"One of these days you will find out that I am the captain of this boat and that you will have to obey me," says Makuba.

"Not as long as I can carry a gun," answers Obianga.

By this time they are standing up and looking hard at each other. But Makuba would not think of striking a man in a mission boat. He therefore becomes diplomatic. Suddenly in a tone altogether different he says:

"Obianga, the trouble with you is that you are just a bushman; you don't know anything about civilization. On every big ocean-steamer there is a captain, and every man on board, no matter what tribe he belongs to, obeys the captain."

Obianga becomes instantly curious and asks: "Is he rich?"

"Yes," says Makuba, "he gets big pay, and so do I get big pay."

"How much do you get, Makuba?"

"How much do you think?"

Obianga thinks, as well as he knows how, his countenance distorted with the effort, and at length answers reflectively: "Two dollars a month."—He himself gets a dollar and a half.

A broad smile engages Makuba's features as he slowly answers: "Five dollars a month."

Obianga gives expression to his surprise in a long, low whistle. It is quite evident to him that no ordinary person could command such wages; and in a tone of utmost complianee he says: "What was it you told me to do, Makuba? I forget."

"I forget too," says Makuba. "O, yes," he adds, "I told you to haul on the peak halliards."

Again, it is night, dark and stormy: a tornado seems to be approaching. Captain Makuba shouts the order to Obianga, to "make fast the jib-sheet."

Obianga, who is no more afraid of a tornado than anything else, and whose head is nodding with sleep, tells him to mind his own business.

Makuba, losing his patience, of which he has not a large stock, calls him a cannibal—the worst insult he could offer him, and adds: "You especially like to eat us Kombi people: you say our flesh is the best."

"You lie," says Obianga (the current form of polite contradiction), "we like the Bekeli people better than the Kombi; there is more salt in the Bekeli."

Do not conclude from this that Obianga himself is a cannibal. He probably never tasted human flesh; but it is not so long since his fathers emerged from cannibalism but that tradition still distinguishes between the flesh of the surrounding tribes; nor was Obianga at this moment disposed to admit that Makuba would make a more savoury dish than any of the rest of us.

In spite of Makuba's anger it strikes him as very funny

that his intended insult should fall so wide of the mark, and he laughs "in linked thunder long drawn out." There is nothing more contagious in Africa than laughter, and Obianga joins in it; and then of course he obeys the order. Soon after this, the storm having passed, they are singing together "I have a Father in the Promised Land," singing it well, too; and while they sing I fall asleep.

But if a tornado should swoop down upon us, as it happens so often, or a drenching rain should catch us, the half child nature in Makuba would disappear immediately and reveal a whole man, strong, fearless and resourceful. In a tornado no man knew better than he just what to do for safety; and in a rain-storm his only anxiety seemed to be for the health of the white man—lest he should get wet, while at such times it was almost a matter of politeness with him not to protect himself.

Once on a journey of three days on the open sea, from Benito to Gaboon, I was miserably sick the second day and could not eat. Neither would Makuba eat, because I did not. The wind was contrary, and he sat at the stroke oar pulling hard until two o'clock in the afternoon without food. At last almost in tears (speaking in Kru English in which he and I always conversed) he said: "Mr. Milligan, hunger no catch you? All this day I look you and you never chop. Suppose you no chop you go die."

Observing for the first time that his own food had not been touched, I said in surprise: "What for all them chop live same as morning-time? Yourself you never chop all this day?"

He replied: "Suppose you no be fit for chop then I no chop; I wait you, Mr. Milligan."

"But Makuba," I said, "suppose me and you, all two, be sick, then what man go take care of me? I no want other man; I want you."

"Ah, Mr. Milligan," he replied with a smile, "white man have plenty sense all same as God ; black man be same as piccaninny." Thereupon he took food and ate heartily, for he was very hungry.

I received Makuba into the church and baptized him. He was an honest man and a faithful Christian. He had a mind of his own too, and was quite original in some of his opinions. He detested every form of affectation and was fond of saying that the black man must adhere to his own habits, customs, and fashions, in so far as they were not sinful, instead of imitating the white man. Nor had he any respect for the white man, whether missionary or trader, who would fall into the ways of the black man, in speech, or dress, or manners. I quite agree with him as to the principle, but I sometimes was at variance with him in the practice. For instance, when Makuba used the boys' bread-knife to trim his toe-nails, and they objected, he invoked this favourite principle of loyalty to his race and their customs, and wanted to know why they affected white man's ways so long as they could not change their skins. Without violating the delicate sentiment attaching to this custom I tried to convince Makuba that there were many black people in the world who would not think of trimming their toe-nails with the bread-knife. If I might judge by his polite but incredulous smile, he probably thought that I was mistaken on this point. But if Makuba were preparing my dinner he would do it with scrupulous cleanliness, not forgetting that I am a white man.

One day we went in the *Evangeline* to a town some thirty miles distant, where there was a Christian, Mba Obam (usually contracted to Mb'Obam) who was the uncle of one of my boat-boys, Ndong Koni. Shortly after our arrival Ndong Koni advised that we should hold our service before night, as the town was preparing for a great

celebration (that is to say, a great dance) that night, to which they had invited the people of an adjacent town. The occasion of all the revelry was the end of the term of mourning for a prominent man of the town, who having been dead a whole month had been sufficiently lamented. It remained only to give him a good "send-off," and to release his friends from any further obligations. During the month of mourning the women wail every night, and there is no dancing.

Towards evening the men of Ndong Koni's town began to adorn and decorate themselves for the fancy un-dress ball, using paint and powder, and wearing round their ankles strings of native bells. The women take no part in these celebrations except to look on and to add to the noise. When they were all ready the men formed themselves into two long lines in the street, with the drums and other wooden instruments across one end. A certain famous dancer performed in the middle, down the lines and back, to the beating of the drums. He seemed to be all joints, and he passed from shape to shape so rapidly that at times he seemed to have no shape at all. At intervals all the men danced, keeping their places in the line, but at certain changes in the music whirling to the other end of the street, and back, adding also a wild song to the beating of the drums, and furiously shaking the bells on their ankles, by which means together with a sudden stamp upon the ground they managed to mark time, which they did to perfection, and to add rhythm, which was quite fascinating in such a volume of noise.

Among the tribes which have been longer at the coast such celebrations are attended with rum-drinking; they are also continued all night, and before morning the scene is a hideous debauch. But the Fang have not yet become victims of the white man's rum, and I know of no wrong attaching to these dances of the men except that they

sometimes get excited almost to frenzy ; when this occurs they are not unlikely to draw their knives on each other upon the slightest provocation, thus closing the celebration in a free-for-all fight and the spilling of blood.

“ Where is the man who hath not tried
How mirth doth into folly glide,
And folly into sin ? ”

Ndong Koni had joined in the frolic. In one particular dance they used firebrands which they waved before them. Next to Ndong Koni stood a man of giant size who thought he had a grudge against one of the family. When the excitement was at its height he suddenly threw fire in Ndong Koni's face. Ndong Koni was only a boy of about nineteen years and not large ; but quick as a flash he struck the fellow a blow in the face. The man, instantly drawing his sword, sprang at him ; but Ndong Koni had already drawn his sword and was on his guard. In a minute, as it seemed, the men of the two towns separated and stood facing each other, a sword in every man's hand. Then, thrusting and parrying, they circled around and drifted down the street towards the place where I was sitting. Before any serious wounds were inflicted, the chief, Mb'Obam, hearing the clash of swords, came from his house, and running between them at considerable risk to himself begged them not to fight, especially, he added, when the white man was visiting their town. He soon succeeded in quieting them.

Meantime I had been occupying a seat of honour, a real chair, or the venerable remains of one (probably the only chair in the town), infirm and unstable, and with one leg missing. Here I was maintaining a feeble existence against a fearful onslaught of mosquitoes. Another of my boat-boys, an old man of Liberia, named Benjamin, was near me when the quarrel occurred at the other end

of the street. Benjamin did not understand the Fang language very well. He heard their angry voices and saw the flash of their swords as they were moving towards us. Hearing them also call out the name of the white man, Benjamin reached the extraordinary conclusion that they were going to kill me. Quite terrified, the old man rushed towards me with the cry, "O my master, my master!" and flung his arms around me, probably with the benevolent intention of dragging me off into the thicket, or hiding me in some hole; but the chair on which I was sitting, being a delicate piece of furniture and lacking a leg, as I have said, was overturned, and I went sprawling on the ground all mixed up with Benjamin, and wondering whether the man had gone mad. By the time I gathered myself up and got my parts together the quarrel in the street was quieted and Benjamin saw his mistake. No further misadventures occurred during the remainder of this pleasant evening.

Poor Benjamin! We shall not hear of him again, and we may dismiss him with a word. That was the last journey he made in the *Evangeline*. He was a capable, hard-working and kind-hearted old man, and we were all attached to him. But rum was his besetting sin and finally his ruin. After a long hard struggle against it he at last gave up the fight and became a helpless and hopeless victim. I had to dismiss him. When I left Africa he was in a native town near by, drinking himself to death; nor could he live long. But so great is the multitude hurrying down this same broad road to destruction that one more old man would never be noticed in the crowd.

Ndong Koni who figured in the fire-dance, was the one I have known most intimately of all Africans, and the one who made the strongest appeal to my affections. He was a handsome boy, as light in colour as a mulatto,

of gentle manners and affectionate disposition. He came to me and engaged as a boat-boy shortly after I began work among the Fang. I taught him constantly. He served in many capacities varying from boat-boy to cate-chist.

Soon after Ndong Koni began to work for me, I visited a group of towns in the interior accompanied by him and several other natives. We walked nine miles by a good forest path and then travelled twelve hours by canoe. I recall that on that journey I was preaching in a certain town to a good-sized audience who were gathered in the palaver-house, when an old man, seated directly in front of me and beside an anvil upon which he had been hammering, became tired of my sermon and deliberately took up his heavy hammer and resumed his work, pounding the anvil with a deafening noise against which I could not proceed. The joke was plainly on me. Addressing a young man, I asked him if he would help me to carry the anvil outside, which we proceeded to do, before the old fellow realized what we were about, taking it to a safe distance, and leaving him sitting there with his work all around him. Thereupon I proceeded with "secondly," and "thirdly."

In returning, two days later, we started in the canoe at five o'clock in the morning and the boys paddled until seven at night, when we again took the forest path. We had expected upon leaving the canoe to stay all night in a native town at that place; but sure symptoms of approaching fever warned me that I had best get home as soon as possible, which necessitated a walk of nine miles by night through the forest. The road was somewhat open, however, and the path well cleared, so that the journey was quite possible. The men were worn out after their long day's work. When I told them that I wished to go home that night their first exclamations of surprise

were followed by profound silence. I said : "I know you are tired and it is not necessary that you should go on with me ; but I ought to have one boy, for I am not sure of the road."

Before I had finished, Ndong Koni, although the youngest of the party, had my food-chest on his head, and starting off said : "Mr. Milligan, I too, I go with you."

In all my journeying in the *Evangeline* Ndong Koni was with me. He was my best helper in the religious services in the towns. He was boat-boy and preacher and often cooked my meals besides, for he was always willing to be called upon for extra service. Upon reaching a town he would take the organ on his head and carry it into the town, where he would find the best place to hold a service, and he and I would go through the town and call the people. After singing a few hymns, in which all the boat-boys joined, I would speak to the people a while and then ask Ndong Koni to speak. I have learned my best lessons from him. Not only was he fluent in speech, but with lively intelligence and unfailing sympathy he adapted his subjects and his words perfectly to his hearers. A more kind-hearted boy I have seldom known in any land, although cruelty was the most prominent characteristic of the heathen around him, of whom were his own people. The only reason I can give for this contrast is simply that Ndong Koni was a Christian.

He had faults, I well know. But I am not the one to mention them, so much do I still feel my indebtedness to him for innumerable kindnesses through all those years, in which he journeyed with me sharing exposure and hardship, sharing also the joy of preaching the Gospel.

On one occasion Ndong Koni went into a French trading-house and asked for something which he wanted to buy. The white man behind the counter told him that

he did not have the article. Ndong Koni turned to go out, but the white man called to him and said: "Why don't you buy rum instead?"

"Because I am a Christian," answered Ndong Koni.

The white man railed at his belief and told him his own anti-Christian beliefs.

"Well," said Ndong Koni, "if I believed as you do I would drink rum and do a great many other things that I do not do. But as long as I am a Christian I shall not do those things."

Once at the close of a school term when I was taking the schoolboys home, I had seventeen boys in the *Evangeline*, which I was towing behind the *Dorothy*. We had gone about twenty miles when the engine of the *Dorothy* suddenly stopped and refused to go in spite of all my efforts. I found afterwards that the benzine which had been sent me from Germany was not the quality which the engine required. I had this same experience frequently during the next several months, and after starting out with the *Dorothy* towing the *Evangeline* we would return to port a few days later with the little *Evangeline* towing the *Dorothy*. But this time I had first to take the boys to their homes leaving the *Dorothy* at anchor. The *Evangeline* with seventeen boys in it was already crowded, but myself and the crew of five men squeezed into it, and room was also made for the men to use the oars. There was a good wind but we had no sails. The tide had just turned and was against us, the current was strong, and we sat in that cramped position for ten hours, while those faithful boys pulled hard at the oars without relief. At midnight we reached the first town, twenty miles beyond where the *Dorothy* had stopped. Here we remained until morning. Three of the schoolboys lived in this town. The other fourteen lived in several different towns on other rivers. Morning found me with fever, due to the

long exposure to the sun, for which I was not prepared, not having expected it. It was necessary that I should start for home immediately in the *Evangeline*. But what was I to do with the schoolboys?

In the emergency I called Ndong Koni, who looked tired enough from the long pull at the oar ; but he said that he would take them through the bush to their homes. Of all the boys who have worked for me in Africa there was none excepting Ndong Koni and perhaps Makuba to whom I would have committed the care of so many boys in such a situation. The roads which are but poorly beaten paths lay through swamp and jungle all the way, and at the close of the wet season they were at the worst. The Fang of this region seldom use the bush-path, their towns being all on the watercourses. But the chief difficulty was the danger of meeting enemies on the way, and the fact that certain boys must avoid certain towns. Ndong Koni got them all safely to their homes. But immediately after starting he found that the smallest boy had a sore foot and walked with difficulty. I too recalled this after they had gone and I was very anxious about the boy. Ndong Koni, however, instead of letting him walk, or of sending him back to me, carried him on his shoulders all the way to his town, more than ten miles distant.

The sequel may be of interest to my readers. Before Ndong Koni left me I had engaged a man to take his place at the oar. Knowing from dire experience the unreliability of the native and the ease with which he absolves himself from the solemnest engagements, I told this man that he might change his mind and cancel the engagement if he chose to do so before Ndong Koni should leave me, but that after Ndong Koni had gone he would not be at liberty to change his mind, but would be obliged to accompany me even if it should require a flogging to

persuade him. He protested that his feelings were badly hurt at the suggestion that he would be capable of breaking his promise and of leaving the white man in such a distressing predicament, especially this particular white man, to whom he owed every virtue that he possessed, and any of his neighbours would be glad to testify to his stainless reputation and the purity of his life.

Nevertheless, half an hour after Ndong Koni had gone, when I was ready to start, this saint among savages was missing. I called him and hunted for him in vain; nor could I get a man to take his place. The people told me that he had gone ahead of me in a canoe and was waiting for me at their fishing-camp a short distance down the river—which I knew to be false for the simple reason that they said it was true. I asked them to show me the man's house, but no one seemed to know in which house he lived. His own brothers could not tell me. A bribe of a dose of salts was sufficient to induce the chief to lead the way to the man's house. The door was a large piece of bark propped from the inside. It yielded to a vigorous push so easily that I was precipitated into the house headlong, my feet catching as I passed through the door and my helmet as usual rolling into the ashes. The man, I believe, was hidden within, but I did not search for him. I seized a large earthen jug, used by the women for carrying water and counted a valuable possession, and started off for the river, the whole town at my heels, making a deafening uproar. Many were in violent remonstrance and others were laughing. I took the jug aboard the boat and ordered the boys to push off.

We were getting under weigh when the missing man appeared upon the bank. But the saint had reverted to the savage, and was nothing but an ordinary cannibal threatening to cut me into small pieces and eat me. While the boat moved slowly towards the middle of the

river I talked with him and told him that if he wanted the jug he would have to keep his agreement. He at length offered to go on condition that I would send the jug ashore as soon as he came aboard and not take it to Gaboon, for it belonged to his wife. I agreed to this proposition. He probably intended, when the jug was at a safe distance, to leap overboard and swim ashore. But once I had him in my grip I decided to take no chances lest his noble character might suffer another relapse. I made him lie down on his back in the bottom of the boat beneath the thwarts, and I seated myself on his stomach. The whole population of the town was on the bank, and rending the air with laughter, in which even the man's wives joined. So we put off down the river.

After a while he respectfully advised that it was no longer necessary for me to sit on him ; that he could not possibly swim back to his town, nor walk through the mangrove swamp on either side of the river, and besides he was needed at the oar for he knew that the white man was in a hurry to reach Gaboon. As to the proposal that I change my seat I told him that what was at first a matter of necessity was now a matter of choice and that I could not be as comfortable sitting on a thwart. But one oar was idle ; and besides I was deeply moved by his anxiety to get me to Gaboon as quickly as possible. So I relented and changed my seat, while he crawled out and took the oar. I had a few choice bananas, which I asked him to eat with me, and before he had finished eating we were the best of friends ; and so we were ever afterwards.

The launch *Dorothy* (which succeeded the *Evangeline*) I usually kept anchored well out on the bay, giving her plenty of cable. It was always hard to get out to her in the evening and I preferred to start up the river in the

quiet of the morning but that was not always possible. One evening we were going out to her in a canoe, preparatory to a journey, when the sea was rougher than usual, and we had a misadventure that was no joke at the time. In the canoe were eight natives and several trunks and other baggage. Ndong Koni was in the stern. We soon saw that we were overloaded but we went on, the canoe taking water more and more rapidly.

"We can't make it," said some one; "let us turn back."

But to attempt to turn in such a sea would surely have swamped us; besides, we were more than half-way to the launch.

I gave the order to go on, and every man to pull for his life. I stood up and urged the men to their best. But it was in vain. The canoe settled deeper in the water, which soon came almost to my knees. At last it went under, in eighteen feet of water, and a rough sea that no white man could swim in. Dear reader, if you should ever find yourself in such a situation, a hopeless distance from the shore and the craft sinking into the depths beneath your feet, let me advise you above all things to be perfectly calm. Don't worry. Worry will not help in the least.

I turned to Ndong Koni and said: "Ndong, if my life is to be saved I guess it is up to you to do it."

There was no need to speak to him. He sprang over the heads of several boys and into the water after me, and catching me by the shoulder, fought the sea with the other arm. The canoe came to the surface bottom upwards. The natives old and young swim marvellously, and are at home in the roughest water. We tried to get to the canoe but a wave swept it away; then another dashed it towards us and against us. We clung to it as best we could but again and again we were separated

from it, and again dashed against it. There was a canoe with several natives in the distance; but they either did not see us, or they were disposed to let nature take its course. We might have been devoured by sharks but for the fact that there were a number of us, and we were making plenty of noise. But some men on the shore saw us, and calling loudly for help they at last pushed off a large canoe and came towards us, the captain yelling at the men to pull and pull harder. When they reached us we had been twenty minutes in the water, and were taken out not so much the worse except Ndong Koni, who was exhausted and bruised by the canoe striking him, from which he had each time saved me.

When we reached the beach I am sure no one will wonder that I said to him: "Ndong Koni, if I had a son of my own I could only wish that he were as brave and unselfish as you are."

I asked him what he would have as salvage for saving my life.

He replied: "A tin of corned beef for supper." He seemed to think that was enough.

While we were struggling in the sea fifty schoolboys had reached the beach in a state of panic. The crying of the smaller boys was hysterical and they could not stop even when I was safe on land. They continued to cry, saying the while, "O Mr. Milligan, what would we have done? For you are our father."

At last I dried their tears by saying: "Look here, boys, I know what you are crying for: you are sorry that I was not drowned." Every face was for a moment transfixed with amazement, as they stared at one another. Then they all laughed.

Next day they dragged for my trunk which contained most of the useful things that I had in Africa. At last when the tide was at the ebb they found it. Among

other things which lay in the sea over night was a French Testament that I used to carry with me. I still have this relie.

The kindness of such a boy as Ndong Koni is only appreciated when contrasted with the awful cruelty which is the outstanding feature of all heathenism. And the cruelty of anger or fear is not so revolting as that of their deliberate practice and ordinary customs, dissociated from passion. In a certain town at which we anchored the *Evangeline* one day while we waited for the turn of the tide, we found a woman sick and evidently dying, whose wasted form suggested long suffering. Ndong Koni knew her history and repeated it to me. She did not belong to the town, but had been a prisoner there for five years. A petty war had taken place between this town and the one to which she had belonged. A woman, I believe, had been stolen, and then some killing followed. At the close of the war the people of her town had to pay a dowry and they agreed to send a woman as hostage until it should be paid. This poor woman who had nothing whatever to do with the palaver, was taken from her family and given as a prisoner to the other town, while the guilty man and woman enjoyed themselves and paid no penalty. Her husband had probably married other wives and had ceased to care for her, and he was willing that she should be sent. They never ransomed her, but left her there, a prisoner and slave in the town, with no protection and no rights, until at the end of five years she died. To many such have I tried to tell the story of the Son of Man, who came to give His life "a ransom for many."

One day we visited a certain town which was not far away. Expecting that we would return that evening I took no extra clothing. On the way we were caught in a storm and my clothes were drenched with rain. I could

not spend the afternoon in these wet clothes, and the town possessed no clothes that I could wear. But the chief had a table and a table-cloth. He kindly loaned me the latter and a pair of shoes that had perhaps been discarded by some white man. I did not preach in a table-cloth and a pair of shoes, but I sat and visited with the people.

Mb'Obam, Ndong Koni's uncle, died not long after the visit to his town, the incidents of which I have recounted. He and his wife, Sara, had for a long time lived a pure and exemplary life in the midst of the darkest heathenism. When he died the people accused Sara of having made medicine to kill him. This medicine is a fetish and acts supernaturally: it is not necessary that it should come in physical contact with the victim. Mb'Obam had died of a lingering disease well known to them. But such is the mental degradation incident to the belief in magic and witchcraft that effects are referred to a supernatural cause even when the natural and physical cause is before their eyes. Every death is attributed to magic or witchcraft, and if they are not forward in avenging it the spirit of the dead one will inflict misfortune and even death upon them. Mb'Obam had completely broken with fetishism and had discarded all these beliefs and had bravely defended the victims of native cruelty. At his approaching death he charged the people not to touch Sara nor to charge her with witchcraft, reminding them what a faithful wife she had been and how differently they both had lived since they became Christians. But though they had regarded him with respect and reverence during his life, yet at his death old customs and beliefs asserted tyrannous authority, and they charged Sara with having killed him. It fell to Esona, the succeeding chief, to decree the punishment of Sara. In the vicinity of the French government he would not

dare to kill her. So he led her into the middle of the street before all the people, placed her on her hands and knees, and bound upon her back a heavy load of plantain-stocks. Then two men sat upon the load, on her back, and all the men of the town drove her thus up and down the street on her hands and knees until they nearly killed her. As soon as she had sufficiently recovered from the effect of the awful ordeal they repeated the performance, and repeated it again, until Sara managed through a Christian boy to get a message to me. Leaving the school I made ready the *Evangeline* and went with all haste to the town, thirty miles distant, where I arrived just in time to stop another repetition of the outrage. The sight was too much for me. Mb'Obam and Sara had been the very first of my Fang friends. Whether the impulse was noble indignation or a very mortal temper, the reader may decide. With a stick which I carried I flogged Esona the chief before all the people, and there was blood on the stick when I got through.

One may wonder how a white man could do this in a town of savages without sacrificing his own life. I may say that there was perhaps not another town on the river in which I could have done any such thing and have escaped with my life. Safety in such a situation depends upon the extent of a man's influence and personal authority in the particular town. It is the part of wisdom for him to know the extent of his influence in each town and the part of discretion never to overreach it. In this instance Esona, breaking away from me like an animal frantic with rage, shouted for his gun and ran towards his house to get it. But a cry of alarm was raised, as I expected, and half a dozen men rushing upon him, held him fast. He broke loose from them and others joined him. For a moment it looked as if my own life and that of the crew (except Ndong Koui, who was related in the

town) were forfeited, and the fate of the *Evangeline* were like that of the famous ship which was left —

“ With one man of her crew alive,
What put to sea with seventy-five.”

But they caught Esona again and threw him to ground, shouting at me the while to leave the town as quickly as possible. To their mingled entreaties and curses I yielded a tardy compliance, which however was not nearly as reluctant as it seemed.

There is a sequel to this story also, which I shall relate. This chief Esona, whom I flogged, announced a few days later that he was going to marry Sara. He already had seven wives, and the thought of such a marriage was repugnant to Sara. But she had no choice in the matter and was compelled to marry him. Polygamy is not always a happy institution, even in Africa. The seven wives were angry and jealous. Being powerless to injure Esona they avenged themselves upon Sara. One day shortly after the marriage, as she was walking along the street, they suddenly came running from their houses with knives and attacked her. They wounded her and would have killed her but she was rescued by some men who happened to be near. A woman costs money and her life may not be sacrificed wantonly.

Then these wives tried another expedient. Four women in succession, coming from different towns, visited Esona and solemnly told him that they had had a dream concerning him—all four of them in succession relating the same dream. They had seen Mb'Obam, Sara's dead husband, who was very angry that Esona had married Sara, and threatened all kinds of plagues and finally death, if he would not put her away. A few days later their word was confirmed when five houses belonging to Esona were

burned to the ground. They were perfectly aware that a certain young man of the town had accidentally let some live coals fall upon some dried thatch and the fire had started forthwith. Nevertheless, with one voice the people attributed the fire to Mb'Obam, and Esona in great fear, believing that his life might be the next forfeit, let Sara go. After a period of various trials and sorrows dire fortune at last relented and I was glad to learn that Sara was comfortably married to a Christian man.

One quiet day, as we were pulling up the river in the *Evangeline*, seventy miles from the coast, a man suddenly emerged from the forest and came rapidly towards us in a canoe. When he came near I recognized a Fang friend, a young man about twenty years old, named Ingwa, who had been one of my first boat-boys in the *Evangeline*, and who was a Christian. After a hearty greeting I said: "I am surprised to see you, Ingwa; I sent word to you long ago that I would like to have you again in the *Evangeline*, and I have not heard a word from you." But, observing that he looked worn and sick, I asked him what was the matter; and he told me the following story: "A year ago I was married to a woman whom I had loved for a long time and who loved me. I paid the dowry and took my wife home. We both were very happy, for I loved only her and she loved only me. After six months her father and brothers agreed with another man to take her from me and give her to him, wishing to make friendship with his town. Her father invited her and me to visit him. During the night they suddenly rushed in upon us and made us prisoners. They tied my wife's hands and led her away. Then they bound me, hands and feet, and put me into a canoe and pushed the canoe out into the current of the river. Far down the river towards the sea I was picked up by some people who knew me and were friendly. They set me free and I bor-

rowed a paddle and reached my own town. But I could not stay there, it was so lonely ; for my wife was gone and my heart was sick. They sent her to the other man's town, but I knew that she loved only me. I hid in the forest near that town, but I could never see her. Six months I have been hiding in the forest, night and day, and I have been hungry, and sometimes sick. They know I am there and are trying to kill me. Her father sent word to me that he would pay me back the dowry ; but I want only my wife. And surely God will help me ; I will meet her again, and she will go with me. For I love only her, and she loves only me." The story ended in a sob.

With a hasty good-bye he turned and sped towards the shore, while I sat, silently and with aching heart, watching, till the dark form was merged into the darkness of the forest and we saw him no more. But how changed was nature's aspect ! How different the impression of the hazy, languid atmosphere, the torpid life of bird and beast, the deep mystic forest with dark forms moving like phantoms to and fro, screened from the river by a heavy veil of vine and flower that hung from the tops of the trees and lay upon the water below ; and behind the veil a real and tragic world of human suffering and breaking hearts !

Not long after this Ingwa, still watching and waiting in the forest, met his wife. They fled together, days and nights through the forest, until they reached a town far away, which Ingwa had once visited in trading for rubber and ivory and where he had made friends. There they were still living when I left Africa. A native trader afterwards visited that far distant town of the forest, and returning, brought me a message from Ingwa. The trader informed me also that he found the people of the town singing Christian hymns and praying, and that through the influence of Ingwa many had thrown away their fetishes and were followers of Christ.

XIV

A SCHOOL

THE schools of the Congo Français are under the inspection of the government, and there is a law that the French language shall be the language of the school. It has been very difficult for an American mission to comply with this law, and when it was first enforced some of our schools had to be closed. It was mainly because of this difficulty that several stations on the Ogowé River were transferred to a French Protestant missionary society. Our missionaries then enlarged their work at Batanga, which is in German territory, and opened the several stations among the Bulu of the interior, a work that has greatly prospered. It was only a few years, however, until they were required to teach the German language in the schools; and the German law was as rigidly enforced as the French. There was also a similar law in the English colonies. This requirement had been regarded as unjust and as a great hindrance to the success of missionary work. Personally I have no quarrel with it in either respect, and I think that the mind of the whole mission in late years has undergone a change on that subject. Even if there were no such law, I believe that the ultimate success of the work would necessitate a European language; and that language must be and ought to be that of the governing power.

Of course the people of the various tribes must hear the Gospel preached in their own native tongue; as it was on the day of Pentecost, when every man heard the word in

the language in which he was born. The itinerating missionary must use the native dialects. But when the native becomes a student, seeking more extensive and more accurate knowledge, the native dialect is beggarly and wholly inadequate. If ideas require words for their conception, then the paucity of words and the poverty of expression make it impossible for the student using the native language to think as it would be required of him in the class-room. The acquisition of French is a cultural factor to the African in a sense that it is not to the American. For most of the French words have no exact equivalent in his own language, and such words present new thoughts. Moreover, education introduces him to the world of books, and without the foreign language he is confined to the very few and meagre translations that missionaries may make into an obscure dialect of a small tribe.

The future of the boys also, their material welfare, depends largely upon the knowledge of a European language. It is not to be expected, and is no way desirable, that the boys of the schools should return home only to "sit for town" all their lives according to native fashion. Idleness is the devil's opportunity; and those who have been in the schools invariably desire to work. For most of those in the French Congo work means employment with white men—the government officials or the traders—and in either case the knowledge of French is necessary. But others of these boys become catechists and ministers in after years and, as I have said, if these are to be educated they must know French. It is fortunate for the missionary teacher that the Africans are very apt linguists. They have but small talent for some studies; in mathematics they are usually stupid, but in the acquisition of languages they are scarcely surpassed.

During my second year in the French Congo I opened

a school at Baraka with a small class of boys, and gradually enlarged it until in my last year there were seventy-five boys. The whole plan as projected in my mind, which it took several years to establish, was to have one central boarding-school at Baraka, with primary day-schools in many of the towns. In these latter the people, old and young, boys and girls, as many as wished, were taught to read in their own language. Boys were required to be able to read in their own language before being admitted to the boarding-school. Religious teaching was an important part of the curriculum. Some of the most advanced Christian boys of the boarding-school became catechists and were sent to those towns where there were groups of professing Christians (catechumens) awaiting a course of instruction before being received into the church. For no converts were baptized inside of two years, during which time they received a careful course of instruction as nearly continuous as possible. Ultimately some of these catechists, I hoped, would become ministers.

The government inspection of the mission schools and the strictness of the law's enforcement in regard to the language, depended, as I found, not much upon the amount of French taught in the school, but upon the good or ill will of the inspector. Shortly after I went to the French Congo the missionaries withdrew from the interior station, Angom, but a day-school in charge of a native teacher was kept open for some time afterwards, which was quite outside the theory of the plan I have outlined for the town schools. It was a regular primary school in hours and curriculum and was not taught by a catechist as a mere adjunct to his religious work. This school therefore came under the government inspection. It had been exceedingly difficult to keep a competent teacher in charge of it, as the government required. Those who knew sufficient French to teach were few and in great de-

mand for the government service, in which they received higher wages than we could afford to pay.

A certain Mpongwe man, Remondo, was left in charge of the school when the missionaries withdrew, but only as a temporary expedient, that the pupils might be kept together until a competent teacher could be procured. Remondo was a Roman Catholic, but he was quite willing to lay aside his seapulary, and his conscience for that matter, for the slight remuneration incident to the position. Remondo nearly always had a rag on his toe. Some of his pupils had not even that much clothing. He wrote his name without a capital letter, and in a line as nearly vertical as horizontal; and the obliquity of his writing was equalled by the iniquity of his French; while there was such an uncertainty about his addition that I used to say that mathematics was not an exact science in Remondo's hands. Finally, not being able to procure a competent teacher, I decided to close the school. Remondo was amazed and he firmly protested. The fact that he was not doing the work made the position all the more congenial to his temperament, and made it also, in his opinion, the more ungenerous to disturb him. Why close the school? Was not the attendance good? Was not the discipline perfect? I admitted that he had all the accessories of a good teacher and lacked nothing but the essentials. Nevertheless, my mind being set upon it, I closed the school.

During this interval while Remondo was in charge, I was in constant dread of an official visit from the *chef de poste* of the district, who would naturally be the government inspector for that school. This dread had become chronic when one day I was amazed at the receipt of a very kind letter from the governor himself, informing me that the *chef de poste*, whom he had directed to visit the school at Angom, had reported that he had examined the

pupils and conversed with the teacher and that the school was highly satisfactory in every way and a credit to the mission. The governor hoped that we might open other schools of the same kind! Goodness gracious! I lost no time in making inquiry of a certain official as to who was the *chef de poste* of that district—for I knew there had been a change lately. He replied: "M. de la R——." Then I understood it all.

The late M. de la R—— had already been in the service of the Congo Français for thirteen years when I first met him. He endured the climate remarkably well and only at long intervals returned to France on furlough. He belonged to a good family. He also had a wife and children in France. His wife once went to Africa with him but she soon returned home; I was told that she was a fine woman; he himself when I met him was the pitiful remains of a gentleman who had been ruined by the two vices which have made West Africa in many minds a synonym for perdition. During his first years he was faithful in his official duties and he rose in the service. He was at one time administrator at Bata, not far from our mission station, Benito. It was under the administration of this very man that our long-established schools at Benito were closed by the government on the ground that the law in regard to the French language was not being strictly observed. But our missionaries of that station believed that the action of M. de la R—— was due to the influence of the French priests.

After many years of increasing dissipation he was dismissed from the service for various discrepancies. His health was not good, and he was prematurely old. He had not been in France for many years, and he said that he would never go there again. Thus he was an outcast and without means of support in a foreign and hostile climate. At length a certain trader of Libreville took

pity on him. Eight miles back in the bush, the trader had a coffee-farm that had about petered out ; and there he sent the ex-administrator, and gave him employment for which he paid him enough to keep him alive. He lived alone there for more than a year, separate from all white men, a black mistress his only companion.

One day visiting some interior towns, I followed a road that passed through the farm. I was greatly surprised at seeing a white man there, but not at all surprised that in such a place he was dressed only in pajamas. Leaving the road I went to the house to salute him. He told me who he was and urged me not to hurry on but to stay with him awhile ; it was so good to see a white man. I felt so sorry for him that I thought I could do no better missionary work for that day than to visit with him ; so I changed my plans accordingly, remained with him all morning and ate dinner with him, the table being served by his black mistress. I thought he would probably live but a short time and I felt as if I were performing his obsequies. It is strange how a man whose dignity resides not within himself, but wholly in outward circumstances, in social position, in pecuniary abundance, or the tawdry pomp of authority,—it is strange how such a man, when these all fail, sinks in his self-respect to the level of abject prostration. M. de la R—— had been fastidiously regardless of his dress and his personal appearance ; but now he spent his days in shabby pajamas and even shunned the acquaintance of soap and water.

He spent the whole time of my visit in telling me of the wrongs done him by fellow officials, that had culminated in his dismissal from the government service. He shed some tears and I fancied that they made clean streaks down his face. He told me what a respectable life he had lived ; and I declare that I should never have suspected it. But when he also claimed sobriety as one of

his chief virtues, nothing but the odour of his breath kept me from becoming an anti-temperance fanatic on the spot. Several of the men who had informed against him had since died, and in this he saw the finger of God ; for of course they would never have died if they had not been his enemies. He, the animated remains of M. de la R——, was still the centre and explanation of the government of the universe, and God was simply a convenient instrument of vengeance. To that extent he was quite religious. And I ought to add that he believed in forgiving his enemies—but only after they were dead. But I pitied him greatly, and stayed with him most of the day. When I left him I had not the least expectation that I would ever see him again.

A year after this, by a strange turn of the wheel of fortune, this man was reinstated, and was appointed a *chef de poste*. He easily resumed his former dignity of manner and care of dress. But he lived only a few months to enjoy his recovered prestige. During those months, however, he was appointed to inspect the school at Angom and his enthusiastic report (for which I hope he may have been forgiven) was the expression of his gratitude for the visit I had made him when he was without position, without money and without friends. Thus the bread of a little kindness cast upon the waters returned after many days multiplied into loaves. And he was the man who, years before, had closed our splendid school at Benito, because, forsooth, the missionaries were not diligent enough in teaching the French language. I also learned from Remondo that at the close of his inspection of the school at Angom he gave each of the little boys and girls a present of some tobacco.

When I opened the school at Baraka I found it very difficult to procure boys. There were many boys who desired to come, but their parents would not consent. At

the beginning of the term I gathered the boys with the launch, *Dorothy*. The red-hot contentions between me and the fathers and mothers made this work of opening the school the most exhausting and trying of the whole year. Often I was constrained to regard the parental institution as an intolerable nuisance and the orphan estate as a consummation that the African child might devoutly wish for.

In one town a handsome boy was determined to come with me, and by prolonged talking I had subdued his father and was hurrying away when suddenly the mother appeared upon the scene, cursing me, and threatening to take the boy's life. Another contention followed, which I won by many words and a small piece of laundry soap. The victory seemed complete; the father and mother were sending the boy away with their blessing, and speaking kind words to me; we were about to get into the canoe to go to the launch, which was in the middle of the river, when an old and very ugly woman, grand-aunt or something of that sort, came rushing towards us, shrieking and flinging her arms about her, cursing me, and altogether presenting such a spectacle as might suggest that one of Macbeth's witches had escaped from the underworld. Quickly, and in great alarm, we sprang into the canoe and pushed off; for I would rather fight with ten men than one woman. But there were many of us, we were standing up in the canoe, and before we had sufficient way on she had waded after us up to her neck in water, and laying hold of the canoe with both hands, she tried to capsize it—which would be easily done. The state of my health made it advisable that I should try to avoid being thrown into the river. Besides, the whole town was now gathered on the bank, rending the air with laughter, and if I failed they would continue to laugh for a year or two. I caught her hands and tried to wrench

them from the side of the canoe ; but I did not wish to use all my strength against an old woman, and moreover she had the advantage of standing on the ground, while I had to balance the canoe ; so I failed in the effort. A second more and we would have been in the river, when I caught her by the back of the neck, and, ducking her head under the water, I held her there as solemnly as I could until she so far weakened as to let go her hold on the canoe, and we moved on, while the audience on the bank cheered. But I had a most unheroic feeling all the rest of that day.

In another town, a father who refused to let his boy go, said : "I don't want my boy coming back here knowing more than his father, his skin all clean, while his old father sits around with the itch scratching himself. Why, the boy would despise me ! I won't let him go."

For more than a year I taught the school daily without any assistance except that one or two of the advanced boys sometimes taught the junior classes. Then I engaged, as an assistant, a Mpongwe, named Nduna, a boy of seventeen years, whose father, Rekwangi, was quite civilized and an old friend of our mission. Poor Nduna's life ended very tragically less than two years later. He was a handsome boy, of quiet disposition and kind-hearted. He was with me so much in the schoolroom and was so faithful in his work that I came to know him well and to like him. At the end of the year he told me that he had the offer of a better-paying position in one of the bureaus of the government at Libreville and I advised him to accept it. I understood that he gave good satisfaction to his employer. After several months a sum of money was stolen from a safe that had accidentally been left open. There were French clerks in the same office, but Nduna was the only native. He was immediately arrested. There was not a shred of evidence against him

except that the money had been stolen from that particular office and that he was the only native there. It was hard for me to believe that he was guilty even before I had heard the evidence, and when I supposed that it must be strongly against him. But when upon inquiry I learned all that was known, I concluded with a great many others that he was innocent. And the others did not know him personally as I did.

A native may be capable of committing a very clever theft, but I never knew a native who could cleverly conceal it. A certain workman, Ndinga, stole a coat from me, and a few days later walked into the yard with it on. Ndinga was not intelligent like Nduna. But I knew another boy who about the same time stole a considerable amount of cash from a white man. He was a very clever rascal, and proved himself so in the procuring of the money. Yet he carried it in his pocket as long as it lasted (which was only a few days) and treated all his friends with lavish generosity. Among themselves the detective faculty is dull. And this is probably because they so readily resort to supernatural means of discovering a criminal, instead of following a natural clue, or weighing the evidence of circumstances against a suspected person. While the white man racks his brains with mere probabilities, the native goes to the witch-doctor, who promises him certainty. The witch-doctor names several persons, often personal enemies to himself, and they are forced to undergo some ordeal, such as dipping their hands in boiling oil, which will burn only the guilty. It is an easy and expeditious method, and especially remunerative for the witch-doctor. But it involves none of those mental operations whereby facts are weighed, comparisons made and conclusions reached. The judgmental faculty lies dormant. It would not therefore be expected that the

thief would be as careful of his tracks as if he lived in the land of Sherlock Holmes.

In the case of Nduna no money was found either with him or his relations. Neither had he spent an extra centime. The natives themselves never believed Nduna guilty, and there were others also who thought him a victim of foul play. The natives of Libreville and the immediate vicinity are treated with humanity and justice, as a rule; but there have been exceptions to the rule. Nduna was tried and sentenced to imprisonment. I have forgotten the term of his sentence. He was not strong; his lungs were weak, and after several months in the noisome prison he developed tuberculosis. He failed rapidly, and when several more months had passed it was very plain that he had not long to live. His father, Rekwangi, and his mother, Aruwi, pleaded pitcously for his release, but the request was sternly refused. I shall never forget the grief of those unhappy parents,—grief mingled inevitably with bitterness against the white man; for they had no doubt that their boy was innocent. The weeks passed and still the same message came: "A little worse to-day."

At length one night some one brought word to Rekwangi that Nduna was dying. The father hurried to the prison, two miles away. But the guard told him that the white man would not admit him. If I had only known it in time I could probably have procured his admission. Or if not, I at least might have afforded the parents some relief by going in myself and staying with Nduna. For many of the officials who are bold in dealing with defenseless black people are abjectly compliant when they confront a white man. For hours that night the father walked outside the prison wall crying aloud: "O Nduna, Nduna, my only son, how can I give you up! It is not God, but the white man who has taken you from

me. Is he still living? Tell him that his poor old father is close to him, standing just outside the prison wall. O Nduna, my son, my son!"

At last, towards morning, the guard cried out: "Your son is dead."

Then the wretched man, overwhelmed with grief and frenzied with bitterness, gave way to doubt of the Christian's God, and running to the house of a friend near by asked for rum. "Give me rum," he cried, "lest I kill myself." The rum was given him and he drank till he was drunk.

That morning Nduna's body was carried home. All the family and many friends were gathered together. They laid him on a pile of mats on the floor of the room, with his feet towards the door, and covered him completely with a coloured robe. As soon as I heard that the body had come I went to the house. While I was yet a great way from the town I heard the wail of their mourning dirge; that weird, unceasing cry of hopeless grief, which I had heard so often, but never before under such harrowing circumstances, and it smote upon my heart. As many as could enter the house were sitting on the floor and many on the ground outside. All the women who were in civilized dress had turned their clothes inside out as a sign of grief. Aruwi sat on the floor at Nduna's head, piteously sobbing. As I entered the door they all stopped mourning and there was a deep silence. For once, in Africa, I felt that I could not speak. No words could do justice to that heartrending scene. I stood a long time before the covered body, as silent as themselves. At last I said: "Aruwi, I want to see Nduna's face."

She turned down the covering and when I had looked at him a while I said: "It is a good face, Aruwi,—a beautiful face. Nduna was a good boy. You will not

forget, Aruwi, that there was one white man who knew him and who loved him."

They remained silent as I withdrew, until I reached the end of the village street, and then again, they all began to chant the mourning dirge.

When the members of the Gaboon Church die they are buried in the mission graveyard on Baraka hill. The reason of this concession on the part of the mission was probably to enable them to control the burial service of Christians that it might be a Christian and not a heathen ceremony. They regard it as a sacred privilege. Nduna was not a member in the church, and none but members had ever been buried at Baraka. But I broke the rule, and told Aruwi that, if she wished, Nduna would be buried at Baraka. And there we buried him that evening. The civilized Mpongwe have a funeral custom that I like. When the casket is lowered and immediately after the benediction, coming forward, they drop a handful of earth into the grave. It is a simple and affecting ceremony and has no superstitious significance. But during all my years at Gaboon there was no other funeral at which so many came forward in silence and dropped a handful of earth into the grave as they seemed to say : "Good-bye, Nduna ; you suffered greatly ; may you rest in peace."

But by far the best teacher I ever had in the school, and without doubt the best native teacher in the entire mission, was Bojedi, a Kombi of Benito, to which tribe Makuba also belonged. Bojedi was twenty years old when I engaged him as a teacher and he stayed with me two years, until I left Africa. He was so well qualified by education and so competent in mind and disposition that I gradually put the whole work of the school upon him, except the religious teaching, which left me more time for itinerating and the oversight and care of the



BOJEDI, TEACHER OF FANG SCHOOL.

He frankly admits the superiority of the white man, but thinks that the black man is far better looking.

Christians scattered in many towns. Bojedi had faults that I do not mean to pass by, but without him the greatly enlarged work of those last two years could never have been done ; and there was probably not in West Africa a native who could have taken his place. Of all the natives who taught or assisted in the school he was the only one whom the schoolboys respected and obeyed as they would a white man. His interest and his efforts far exceeded his prescribed duties. He had charge of the seventy-five boys, both in the schoolroom and out of it, twenty-four hours a day. He was there when they rose and when they went to bed. He insisted upon cleanliness as to their persons, their beds, their food and the manner of eating it. He oversaw their work in the yard, chiefly that of cutting grass, and would not allow any boy to shirk his work. Their most serious disputes he referred to me, but most of them he settled himself, to my immense relief, and they all recognized him as fair. Under his constant supervision these boys, fresh from the worst heathenism, were compelled to live a civilized life. And this he accomplished without force. I never knew him to strike a boy, nor ever did I know him to lose his temper. If he kept a boy in school after hours for not knowing his lesson he stayed with him himself and helped him with his study. Without my asking it he gathered them into the school in the evening for an hour's study, himself helping the duller boys. He had faults, as I have said, but there were none in his teaching or his discipline of the boys.

Bojedi was educated in our mission school at Benito. Among the missionaries of that station there was a French teacher, Mr. Presset, from whom Bojedi received much of his education. Unlike most Africans he was a student by nature, and afterwards while he was so busy teaching in my school he was also pursuing his studies in

mathematics and astronomy. The most that he got from me was music, which was always his pastime. He had received some instruction in music from Mr. Presset, who gave him access to his organ. When he came to Gaboon I placed in his house a baby-organ of my own, and finding that he had unusual musical talent I began to give him occasional lessons. He made much progress and played so well that when I was leaving Africa I left the organ and most of my organ music with him. He played for the singing in school and also in the Mpongwe Sunday-school.

While Bojedi was still in the school at Benito he was brought into undue prominence with the French government in a way that reflected credit upon his scholarship and incidentally landed him in jail with hard labour. France, it is said, rules for revenue, and this would seem to be her policy in the Congo Français. A heavy duty is levied on imports and exports for the purpose of revenue, resulting soon in commercial stagnation—and no revenue. The Congo Français is a large and increasing expense to France. The natives pay taxes upon their houses according to the size and improvements. Each door and each window is taxed. A certain native of Gaboon, an enterprising young man, who wished to live in civilized fashion, put a floor in his house. But he was taxed so much for it that he took it out and went back to the earth floor.

The taxes at Benito were heavy enough, but the local *chef de poste* had been collecting far more than was required. The man was probably full of malaria and had become very irritable; like many of the government officials he was in need of a long furlough home. Burning native towns was a favourite pastime. If the people did not pay their taxes promptly he burned their towns, leaving men, women and children without shelter. If

they paid promptly he required more and when it was not immediately forthcoming he burned their towns. If he called them to him, and they were afraid to come, he burned their towns. If for any reason, or no reason, he doubted that they loved him dearly, he burned their towns. The illumination was a superb entertainment for his friends. He burned towns not in the execution of law, but of his own degenerate will, governed only by a malarious temper.

At last a number of local chiefs addressed a complaint to the administrator at Bata, who was superior to the *chef de poste*. Bojedi, at the request of the chiefs, composed and wrote the letter, which I believe they signed. The administrator sent the letter to the *chef de poste* who upon reading it did not think for a moment that any native could have written it. There was only one white man in the region of Benito to whom it could possibly be attributed; and that was Mr. Presset of our mission at Benito. To make sure of the matter he compared the writing with that of Mr. Presset, from whom he had received letters, and found that it was the same. The result was that our mission at Benito suffered considerable ill-treatment at his hands. At length, one day, he referred to the letter in speaking to Mr. Presset, and was surprised and almost affronted when the latter denied all knowledge of it. Mr. Presset asked to see it, and upon looking at it immediately recognized Bojedi's writing. Bojedi was arrested and sent to jail, although he was only a boy who had done what the chiefs had required of him; the letter was theirs, not his. For months (or perhaps only one—I have forgotten the length of time) he remained in jail and worked at hard labour carrying stone. When at last one morning he was released he had scarcely a stitch of clothing on him and he hid in a bush all day, and walked home to Benito, twenty miles, during the night.

This latter story also has a sequel. While Bojedi was teaching school in Gaboon, this same *chef de poste* who had put him in jail, was there in Gaboon a few days before sailing for France. Bojedi went to see him, and did him several kindly services. The day he sailed (it happened to be Saturday); Bojedi took charge of all his baggage and saw it safely placed on the steamer, which took the whole afternoon. Thus easily does the native forgive and forget.

Bojedi was very simple in manners and direct in speech. It never occurred to him that the purpose of language was "to conceal thought." One day shortly before I left Gaboon he remarked that the schoolboys would miss me greatly. I expressed a doubt on that subject. "O yes, Mr. Milligan," said he, "they will feel badly; for I remember that when I was a schoolboy and Mr. X. left us, we all felt sorry and some of us cried, although we had called him a beast every day."

I have said that to commiserate the African for his colour is a waste of sympathy. One day when I was talking to Bojedi something in the course of the conversation prompted me to ask him whether he would like to be a white man. He replied respectfully but emphatically in the negative. I wished to know his reason; for he acknowledged and fully appreciated the white man's superiority. He hesitated to tell me; but I was insistent, and at length he replied: "Well, we think that we are better-looking."

I gasped when I thought of some of the vastly ill-looking faces I had seen in the jungles, and in apology for myself (and for my race, by implication) I said: "But you have not seen us in our own country, where there is no malaria, and where we are not yellow and green."

He quietly asked what colour we were in our own

country ; to which I promptly replied : "Pink and white."

Looking at me steadily for a moment he remarked : "Mr. Milligan, if I should see you in your own country I am doubtful whether I should know you."

The moral weaknesses of the black race are salient and uniform and Bojedi was far from being an exception to the rule. An imperious sexual impulse is the racial characteristic ; and their surroundings are such that they cannot escape the temptation. One might think that African society, with all its tyranny of social law and custom, were contrived with the sole purpose of immoral indulgence. Many wives is much wealth. Courage, which is held in highest esteem, is displayed chiefly in stealing other men's wives. And under certain circumstances this immorality is even a part of hospitality. The women are more licentious than the men. A woman boasts of her elopements. To become the mistress of a white man is a matter of honour and gives social prestige. The wife of an elder in the Gaboon Church, speaking of a certain young woman, the daughter of a friend, said : "Iga is so 'stuck up' that she scarcely speaks to me now because she is living with a white man." The more glory therefore to missions, that it is able to establish purity and honour in all the social and domestic relations of native converts ! Even in half-Christian communities these heathen standards do not entirely prevail.

The Mpongwe women of Gaboon who have long been in contact with the French are without comparison the most cultivated, best-looking, most artful, and most dissolute women of the entire coast. The story of their licentiousness, as Tertullian once said of the women of the ancient stage, had best remain hid in its own darkness lest it pollute the day. Most young men of other tribes coming among them as Bojedi did are like country boys

arriving in the city, and are easy quarry. He was especially an object of pursuit because, having a good position, he had money ; and their need of money is equal to their love of it.

It was during Bojedi's second year as teacher that I found that he was living in illicit relations with a certain woman. It was a grief to me. He was a lovable boy ; excepting Ndong Koni and Amvama, none were nearer to me than Bojedi. I had come to expect almost as much of him as a white man. Moreover the matter was fraught not only with possible ruin to himself but also with evil influence for the school. For although it was only lately that he had made any profession of being a Christian, he stood before the boys as a Christian in a marked way ; had offered a prayer each morning in opening the school ; had talked with them personally ; and had exercised an influence for good that was the more profound because of their love of him. I waited until night, after hearing this report, and then called him into the schoolhouse, where we would not be disturbed, and there we talked for hours.

I said : "Bojedi, is it true that you are living with Antyandi ?"

He replied : "It is true that I *am married* to Antyandi."—So he had tried to make himself believe.

Antyandi would be regarded by any native as a very attractive woman. Although she looked younger than Bojedi she was really several years older and was artful according to her years. She had some education and spoke and wrote French. She could boast of having lived with several white men, one of them at least of high rank in the government, and from these associations she had acquired a manner that was decidedly smart and foreign, not to speak of trunks filled with fine clothes. She was girlish in form and light in motion and had the

reputation of being a great dancer. It happened once that she danced before King Adandi ; not however for the head of a missionary on a charger, although afterwards she would doubtless have been glad to have had my head thus presented to her. A bottle of champagne was all she asked. Adandi was head of the whole Mpongwe tribe. He was dressed when I saw him last in white shoes, white flannel trousers and shirt, black velvet coat with a heavy gold chain suspended from his neck, and a white hat. He had received part of his education in France. He claimed the dignified distinction of martyrdom, having been twice imprisoned by the French and once exiled. He was a convert of the Jesuits and was profoundly religious—barring such discrepancies as drunkenness, gambling and adultery. King Adandi saw Antyandi dance and he declared that he would die if he could not add her to the number of his wives. She refused him however on the ground that Adandi being a king the relation would involve a degree of constancy on her part to which she was not accustomed. Then he organized a band of young men to seize the lady and carry her off, as they do in books. This had a fine flavour of romance about it. But the chocolate heroine had two invisible leopards, according to her claim, which attended her day and night, and with these she dispersed the brigands.

But Bojedi is still in the schoolhouse making a passionate but sorry defense. He really loved the woman with a fatuous regard, and I believe she was in love with him. He had first asked her uncle if he could marry her, and the uncle, the head of her family, although he was supposed to have absolute authority over her, replied that he had nothing to say in the matter, for Antyandi would do as she pleased anyway. Others of her relations had said that no Mpongwe woman would ever be allowed to

marry a Kombi (to which tribe Bojedi belonged) and that the whole Mpongwe tribe would rise to prevent it. An open marriage was therefore impossible. And, on the other hand, mere publicity is the only marriage ceremony there is among Christians of Gaboon, and to forego publicity was to dispense with all ceremony. But how could a public announcement be called a ceremony? And how could mere publicity constitute a marriage bond?

This latter is in need of some explanation. Everybody knows that in France only those marriages are legal which are made by the state. The Roman Catholic Church insists upon a church marriage also, but it must follow that of the state, and cannot precede it, the one being a legal and the other a religious ceremony. In the colonies this same law is enforced, and the church is not allowed to perform a marriage ceremony until after the legal ceremony of the state. It happens also that there are serious impediments to the legal ceremony and sometimes deplorable consequences. The contracting parties must know their ages—which the African never knows; must know where they were born—which they have never thought of asking and everybody has forgotten; must know their parents, both father and mother. The African knows his mother; but as for his father, he may never have asked his mother that personal question. They could easily have recourse to lies and invent a father, but unfortunately they are required to produce the parents that their verbal consent to the marriage may be obtained. If the parents are not in the country a written consent is required; and if they are dead the proofs of their death must be produced in the form of a burial certificate.

These and other requirements may be good for France, but in Africa they are puerile nonsense. Moreover, these legal bonds are very hard to break; and that were well

enough if only the moral bonds were strengthened thereby, but they are not, and in the case of marital infidelity the law binds only the innocent. For instance two of the very best women in Gaboon, or in West Africa for that matter, were thus bound to husbands who deserted them. One of those men took six other wives in utter disregard of the legal marriage, but that outraged woman could not get a divorce from him without a difficult and expensive process of law ; nor, being a Christian, was she willing to marry without a divorce. We could not therefore advise, still less insist, that the Christians be married by the state, though of course we did not advise to the contrary. And without the legal marriage we were not allowed to perform the religious ceremony.

I performed a few such ceremonies for those who had already been married by the state official. On one occasion the young couple had decided to be married with a ring. But I knew nothing of their intention, and I was surprised when the groom, after the ceremony was entirely ended, produced the ring and asked me what he was supposed to do with it. The bride on that occasion was dressed in a Mother Hubbard of bright blue calico decorated with white lobsters. But I officiated at another marriage in which the bride was beautifully attired, and in good taste that would have done credit to any white woman.

As the natives objected to the legal form of marriage, and we could not conscientiously urge it upon them, there was no recognized or satisfactory form. Of course there are heathen ceremonies, but some of them are drunken orgies which the Christian conscience cannot allow ; and others are so silly that the civilized natives would regard with abhorrence any suggestion of their observance. It is said that in some of the tribes far east of us the bride and groom are required to climb two young saplings,

which are then swayed back and forth until their heads knock together, whereby the marriage is constituted. One wonders what the form for divorce would be like !

The want of a fixed form is very unfortunate. For it is only in such a chaotic period of social transition that we learn the moral value of the so much derided forms and ceremonies, and that without them the marriage tie becomes so loose that it is practically abandoned by many. Gradually it came to be recognized that the payment of the dowry constituted the marriage. For there must be something to differentiate marriage from unlawful relations. This served, though poorly, until the enlightened Christian conscience pronounced against the dowry, and the best people voluntarily refused to accept it and abandoned the custom. Since that time there is no distinct ceremony among the Christian natives at Gaboon, which is deplorable.

In lieu of a ceremony a useful custom has been introduced into the church, namely, that shortly after marriage the man and woman shall rise in their places in the weekly prayer-meeting, voluntarily, and without the minister saying a word shall announce their marriage, the man saying that he has taken this woman to be his wife and promising to be faithful to her ; likewise the woman. Well do I remember one night in the Mpongwe Church when Barro and Anuroguli came to the prayer-meeting which I was conducting, expecting to announce their recent marriage. Barro rose at the end of the service and without the least embarrassment announced his marriage and made his vows in most appropriate words. But Anuroguli, sitting on the other side of the house, was seized with panic and sat motionless with her finger in her mouth. Barro stood waiting for her response while the women near her motioned to her, pulled her dress, punched her in the ribs, until gradually the whole con-

gregation was remonstrating in loud whispers, which only increased the poor little woman's embarrassment, until, seeing that it would be a physical impossibility for her to make her announcement, I took the risk of the law, and rose and said : "Anuroguli wishes to announce," etc. ; and having made her announcement for her, I closed the meeting. But, while all recognize the propriety of this custom, it does not constitute the marriage ; for it takes place after marriage, sometimes long afterwards, and it is not possible unless both parties are Christians.

Bojedi's argument therefore was not without plausibility, and all these facts that I have related he marshalled to his defense very ably and with intense feeling, as we sat there in the dark schoolhouse. It was plain that he had thought of all this before, and that before entering on this relationship he had argued long with his conscience as he now argued with me. But it was also plain that he argued in his defense and not his justification, and that he had allowed his reason to coerce his conscience. I replied that where there was nothing outward except a public announcement to distinguish marriage from an illicit relation, then the announcement became a duty binding on the conscience quite as much as a ceremony ; and that if marriage be not so distinguished we have a society of "free love." And again, as to the inwardness of the marriage relation, upon which he dwelt, that it implied always, whether with or without a ceremony, a sincere intention of *permanency*. I added : "From the regard that you have expressed for Antyandi you would probably desire that your present relation be permanent. But desire is not sufficient without expectation also ; and you know as well as I do that when you leave Gaboon to return to your own people Antyandi will never go with you, and even if she should remain here she would not be true to you. You have therefore, with

full knowledge, entered into a temporary relationship ; which is no marriage in any sense that a Christian can admit."

As repentance is the chief act of man, so it is also the hardest. To make the admission of wrong to me was not so hard as to admit it to himself, with all its consequences. But at last the admission came : a moment later he was on his knees, in tears and sobs. He said : "It is not that I cannot give up Antyandi ; it will be hard enough, but I'll do it. But it is the wrong I have already done and the loss to myself that I feel. These two years while I have been teaching your school I have lived differently from all the other years of my life. Many things that I used to do I had stopped doing. I was happy because my heart was clean, and because the schoolboys all loved me and believed in me. And now all that I have built up in these two years is pulled down. And what will the boys think of me ?"

It would be cruel to repeat all that was said in that conversation. He wept until I felt that tears could do no more, and then I tried to quiet and comfort him. It was midnight when I left him.

Next day he sent a brief letter to Antyandi telling her that he had done wrong, that he was very much ashamed, and that she must not expect him ever to enter her house again. He fully realized that there was a hard fight ahead of him and he thought best not to see her at all. She made many attempts and plied her arts to get him again in her power. She wrote him letters in which she professed to be dying for love of him. I went to her and ordered her not to set her foot on the mission premises. She regarded the order by day, but she came at night. She came to his window waking him suddenly out of his sleep. She tried his door. She came at all hours of the night. One night he found that he could not lock his door. She

had probably tampered with it ; but he did not think of that, for she had not been there for several nights. That night at midnight she came. He broke loose from her and ran straight for my room, where I was in bed asleep. He knocked and entered ; then told me what had happened and begged me to protect him. I told him he must stay in my room the rest of that night ; which he did, and slept on the floor. I kept him there every night for a week ; for more than once he had wavered though he had not fallen. Thus she continued to do for two months ; but the subject is not a pleasant one, and we need not follow the course of events during that period.

After two months we heard that she was in Libreville, the mistress of a dignitary of the government, and Bojedi supposed that that would be the last of her ; but it was not. A month later the white man suddenly left Libreville or died—I have forgotten which—and Antyandi returned home. A few days afterwards, returning from the beach one morning, I observed that in my absence some one had closed the door of my study which I had left open ; the windows also were closed and the blinds down. I hurried in with a vague apprehension of something wrong. There sat Bojedi in the darkened room, his face buried in his hands and sobbing as if his heart would break. I knew instantly what had happened.

“How can I tell you !”

“There is no need to tell me,” I replied ; “go to your own house, Bojedi, and I shall follow you in a little while.”

I went to his house and he told me the whole story of his temptation and fall, a story that I cannot repeat here. He told it with a broken voice and crying all the time. The school had been closed two weeks before, the boys were all gone and nobody around. Bojedi was waiting for the English steamer, on which he was going home.

This complete idleness after his responsible and constant work was perhaps the devil's opportunity. Still crying he rose at length and opening a box took out all sorts of native riches, presents from Antyandi, native robes which must have been paid for by white men, a fancy bed-quilt and embroidered pillow-covers. Without saying a word, but still sobbing, he made a pile of these things just outside his door, while I looked on not knowing what he was going to do, until he struck a match and set fire to them. Then he remarked: "I should have done that long ago;" which I fully admitted; or else he should have returned them, which would have been better. The next day he left for home.

I felt that this moral fall was peculiarly serious, much more so than some sin of sudden impulse. It was no doubt the very crisis of his life, a long deliberate battle in which all his moral resources were called out and all his moral energy engaged. Victory in such a fight transforms temptation into a purifying alembic; but to fall in such a fight means usually to be maimed for life.

Very soon after this I left Africa. Bojedi remained at home the following year. He was married during the year. The last letter that I received from him was dated at Brazzaville, in the very heart of Africa, on the Upper Congo, where he had a good position with the *Commissaire Général*. He says: "Your letter dated at Lebanon, Indiana, August 21, 1906, was received March 20, 1907," after which he tells me that just before he left his home in Benito a son was born to him, whom he has named Robert Milligan! May his tribe increase!

XV

A LITTLE SCHOLAR

THE following letter, with some slight omissions and alterations, was written on board the English steamer *Volta* to a little circle of friends in America :

S. S. "Volta," Aug. 7, 1900.

It is three months since I left Gaboon for a health-change on the sea, and I am just now returning. I had supposed that I would be away only a few weeks ; but the time was prolonged by the sickness and death of an African boy whom I called my little scholar, of whom it is the purpose of this letter to give you some account.

Since the regretted resignation of Mr. Boppell on account of ill-health, I have had charge of the Gaboon Church at Baraka, with the work among the Mpongwe, besides my work among the Fang. You will remember that the Mpongwe is a coast tribe, among whom our church has had a mission-work for many years, while the Fang is the interior tribe (now, however, extending to the coast), among whom the work is quite new. The strain of so much additional work in such a climate greatly overtaxed me, and after four months it became necessary either to take a furlough home, or a health-change on the sea. The furlough was out of the question, for there was no one to take my place. Accordingly on the 16th of May I left Gaboon on this steamer expecting to go north as far as Fernando Po and return on the next south-bound steamer, which would give me a vacation of a month.

Being in miserable health, I took along with me one of my Fang schoolboys, Ndong Mba, the smallest and brightest of his class. I thought I needed him to wait on me. And besides I intended to improve the idle hours in talking Fang with him. But a week after we had left Gaboon Ndong Mba was the patient and I was the nurse. The weeks and months that have intervened, instead of being a period of rest and pleasure, have been the most trying in all my African experience.

Ndong Mba was born in a town not far from Angom. While he was yet a mere baby his father and mother died leaving him to the care of their relations. However willing such relations may be to assume parental authority over a child, they are not so willing to assume responsibility for his care, for the parental love is absent. Moreover, Ndong was very frail; and such a child is not attractive to the African woman, except his own mother. He was therefore heartlessly neglected, until my predecessor, Rev. Arthur W. Marling, finding him hungry and crying, and knowing his miserable plight, took pity on him and carried him in his arms to the mission. Ndong often told me about the kindness of the missionaries. But there was a long interval when Mr. Marling was away on furlough; and then he was dependent upon distant relations who made him thoroughly acquainted with hunger and hard work. He continued frail and was very small, appearing, when I afterwards knew him, several years younger than he was really was.

He attended the school at Angom which was well kept and well taught under Mr. Marling's administration; and at an age when most children do not know their letters he could read. I, who did not know him until the beginning of this present year, have regarded him as an intellectual prodigy. His knowledge of the Scripture and his understanding of it was astonishing in one so young.

The whole Gospel of Matthew, the only one which has been translated into the Fang, he knew almost by heart, besides a considerable acquaintance with the other Scriptures through the Mpongwe translations; for he knew Mpongwe almost as well as Fang. He was baptized and received into the church at a younger age perhaps than any other child has ever been received in our mission; and through the years that have since passed, amidst degrading surroundings of which you in the homeland can scarcely conceive, this little boy kept the faith which he then professed, and grew up pure, truthful, unselfish and affectionate.

Mr. Marling died in the fall of 1896, Ndong Mba being then, probably, seven or eight years old. Long before this, however, the people of his town had moved far away, leaving him behind, and were quite lost sight of. He was now without friends, white or black, at the age of eight. In a distant bush-town there was a woman who had formerly lived in Ndong's town: he made his way to her and begged her to take him in. There, in a town remote from missionary influence, in which there was not one person related to him, the poor little stranger lived for three years, during which no missionary either saw him or heard of him. His position in the town was not much better than that of everybody's slave. His frailty, instead of insuring greater kindness, only made him contemptible. Whenever he spoke of those three years it was always of his sufferings there, and his back was injured by the heavy loads that had been put upon him. He was the only Christian in the town; but there is no doubt that through those hard and lonely years the little Christian was constant and faithful in profession and practice;—as strange, upon its human side, as that a lighted candle should withstand a winter's storm.

At the end of this time a long-wished-for opportunity

came; he joined a company of travellers and again reached Angom, hoping to find a missionary there. There was no missionary there at the time and he found the station closed; but, in a town close by, a woman was visiting who years before had lived in Ndong's town. She was probably a Christian woman, for she was compassionate. Her heart was touched and she took him with her to her home near the coast. It was only a few weeks after this that I met him, at the beginning of this year.

I was gathering a class of Fang boys who had already received a primary education in the school at Angom, hoping that with time and training they might become teachers, and later on, in the providence of God, perhaps preachers. I heard of this boy, and immediately I visited the town where he was staying. The name of the town was typical, *Ebol Nzok: Rotten Elephant*. It seems that when the people of this town still lived in the interior bush they sent a delegation down the river to choose a site for a new town near the coast. The delegation selected a beautiful site, where the river broadens out into the great estuary. They returned and reported their success, and the whole large town at once prepared to move. As they approached the chosen site, and while they were still at a distance, they found the atmosphere of the new country pervaded with a most disagreeable smell which grew worse and worse,—a horrible stench which made them hold their noses, a breath from Gehenna, almost palpable. They forced a passage through it and went on until they reached the middle of the chosen site, where they found the huge carcass of an elephant in an acute stage of decomposition. They thought it proper to commemorate this historical incident in the name of their town, which they called *Rotten Elephant: Ebol Nzok*.

When I visited Ebol Nzok and asked for Ndong Mba

they told me he was away in the distant gardens at work ; so I left word that I would like to see him at Baraka as soon as he could come. One morning, not long after, a tiny little boy came into my study and stood before me, his body thin and frail, but unusually clean, and with extraordinary eyes, dark and sparkling beneath long black lashes. Looking up eagerly into my face and very much excited, he said : “ I’m Ndong Mba ; I’ve come ; and I’m so glad you sent for me. I have not seen a missionary since Mr. Marling died ; and I’ve not been to church, and I’ve not been to school, and I thought the missionaries had thrown me away. And there were no Christians where I live. I was alone ; and I prayed and prayed all the time to come back to the mission ; and now I’m here ; and I’m so glad ; and I will do anything you ask if you let me stay here ; for I can work, and you won’t be sorry if you let me be your boy.” Thus he went on with his pathetic appeal. And this was really Ndong Mba, of whom I had so often heard !

The unusual intelligence of the eyes that looked into mine, eyes in which the tears were now quivering, the faded rag—but very clean—which was the sum of his clothing, and other marks of neglect and suffering, moved me deeply. Drawing the poor little waif close to me I said : “ I am glad to see you, Ndong Mba,” which he accepted as a sufficient answer.

I took him into my class and also assigned him certain work for which I said I would pay him, so that he could buy the little clothing and other things that he needed. He replied : “ Little boys don’t need money ; I only want a father to take care of me, and I’ll work for him all the time.” I thought best, however, to insist upon paying him, but at the same time I told him that I would take care of him as long as we were together. All that day, throughout its duties and its noise, those wonderful ap-

pealing eyes seemed still to be looking up into mine. I felt that God had given into my charge one of His little ones, that I might help to fit him for a great service to his people in years to come. Through all the weeks and months that followed, during which he was continually with me, he fully justified my first impression of him.

This is the little boy that I took with me from Gaboon in May. The second day he had what seemed to be a light attack of malarial fever. The ship's doctor said that he had only caught cold, and assured me that he would be better next day. But the next day he was worse, and the next still worse. One of our missionary physicians came on board at Batanga, going home on furlough. He found Ndong Mba very sick indeed. He had pneumonia—a very severe attack—and pleurisy with it, causing him great pain; this, together with a hard fever. The situation was distressing. I was sick myself and scarcely able to be out of bed, and had brought Ndong along to wait on me. But now he was worse than myself and I was waiting on him.

When we reached Fernando Po, where I had expected to land and to wait for the south-bound steamer, there was scarcely a hope that he would live; and whatever small hope there was would have been cut off by moving him and taking him away from the doctor's care. I had therefore no choice but to remain on board; and I went on to Teneriffe, where I waited three weeks, until the return of this same steamer from England. Indeed, on my own account it would not have been advisable to land at Fernando Po. For I had been attending Ndong almost day and night, and my health-change had thus far been only a change for the worse. Others on board, fellow missionaries, had been kind in trying to relieve me; but as Ndong suffered more, and the fever raged, they could not control him; and after a few minutes they would be

obliged to call me. But they remarked that when I came I had only to speak his name, and he was quiet ; and the brave little man even tried not to let me see how sick he was.

I greatly regretted the necessity of going on to Teneriffe ; for I had expected to be away from my work only one month and had arranged it accordingly, and this extension of my trip would keep me away three months and the consequences to the work distressed me. I no more enjoyed the trip than if I had been a prisoner in irons. Besides, there was difficulty in regard to my accommodations on board, a difficulty that was increasing at each port as we took on more passengers. I had engaged only a deck-passage for Ndong ; but Captain Button whose kindness I can never forget, had told me to take him into my cabin. Thus far I had occupied the cabin alone, but I could not expect that favour to continue longer, as other passengers were coming on board, and already there were two persons in each of the other cabins. The full price of the cabin for myself and Ndong to Teneriffe and return would have been about five hundred dollars. It was therefore a considerable favour that I was accepting from the captain, and it was now at the cost of possible discomfort to others. But this difficulty, I thought, would not last long, for it did not seem that Ndong would live more than a few days. The captain told me not to think of the matter of accommodations at all ; that he would leave me that cabin as long as he possibly could, and if it should become impossible, he actually said that I should bring Ndong up to his own cabin and occupy it. One would need to have been on the coast to have any just appreciation of such extraordinary kindness towards a little black boy. Moreover, almost every morning the captain came to my cabin door and asked for the boy.

Again the unexpected happened. Ndong, one might

almost say, neither died nor lived. He simply lingered, and lingered on, through weary weeks. After a while the worst of his suffering was past, but in his extreme weakness he required almost as much attention as ever. He was quite unable to walk and could only leave his bed as some one carried him, but it was no difficult matter to carry him for he had rapidly wasted away until he was no heavier than a baby. I need not relate the history of those weeks; there were few incidents to recount; but I wish that you might have witnessed the patience of the poor little sufferer.

He had his moments of doubt too. One day when he was talking to me, as I lay in the adjoining berth, I told him that we must try to sleep because that we both were sick. "You sick?" he asked. "You sick, too?"

He partly rose in his bed, and leaning his head on his hand, looked long and wistfully at me. After a while I asked him what he was thinking of.

"I am wondering," he replied slowly, "why we two should be sick. We are both Christians and you are a minister, and there are so many on board who do not try to do right. I hear them cursing God all the time as they pass up and down the gangway. And they are all well. I have often thought of it; but I do not understand."—A little boy from the depths of the African jungle struggles with the same question which sorely tried an ancient sufferer, and to which his friends gave but vain answers.

There was among the deck-passengers a woman whose language Ndong knew, although it was not his own. Before his sickness reached the worst I sometimes asked this woman to sit with him while I sat on deck. One day he said to me: "Mr. Milligan, we must pray for that woman. She is in great darkness. She talked about things she ought not to mention; and I told her about Jesus."

We called at many ports along the way; but I did not

leave the ship. On the fourth Sunday we reached Sierre Leone, usually the last African port for these ships of the southwest coast. In this splendid and beautiful harbour with its amphitheatre of hills, there were more vessels together than I had seen in years. But the most interesting of all was a British man-of-war. I heard the singing at the "divine service" which is held every Sunday morning on all British war-ships. All the passengers excepting myself had gone ashore, and I was alone on the deck, and not only alone, but lonely and tired. Ndong was sleeping in a chair beside me. It was then that the first hymn from the war-ship rang clear across the still water, sung in perfect time by that large chorus of strong men's voices, the harbour forming a perfect acoustic chamber. The tune was the old classic, "St. Anne." The words were those usually sung to this tune in our own churches, "Our God, our help in ~~the~~ ages past!" I have never heard anything more beautiful and impressive; and after my long exile in the jungle my mind was susceptible to the influence of its power and beauty. The hymn, both words and music, had always been a favourite, answering, as it seemed to me, to something fundamental in our nature; but from this time it became *the* favourite. And since that time, whenever I ask choirs and congregations to sing it I am always hearing within and beyond their voices, the music of that chorus of men in the far off African harbour. I cannot forbear to quote the words.

"Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come;
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home !

"Under the shadow of Thy throne,
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defense is sure.

“ Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.

“ Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away ;
They fly, forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day.

“ Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our Guard while troubles last,
And our eternal home.”

At the end of five weeks we reached Teneriffe Island, where I waited three weeks for the return of the *Volta* from Liverpool. As we approached the harbour of Santa Cruz the captain called me to the bridge to see an American flag which waved from a mast among the flags of all nations. “Come,” said he, “and feast your eyes on your American gridiron.”

It did not take me long to get to the bridge. “Don’t point it out,” said I, “let me find it myself.”

Those who have wandered much in foreign lands are more deeply imbued with the sentiment of the flag. But to feel it to the full one must have lived for years in an uncivilized land, where liberty is not yet born. The sight of the flag to me that day was like hearing Madam Patti sing *Home Sweet Home*.

I landed at Santa Cruz and remained there four days—days of unpleasant recollection. It was thought best to keep Ndong as much as possible in the open air. Though very weak he could walk, and I led him by the hand. One would think that these Spaniards of Santa Cruz had never seen a black skin before ; the poor emaciated form added greatly to their curiosity ; and above all, the

novelty of a white man earring for one who to them was only a "little black nigger." I no sooner appeared with the child than a crowd gathered around me, and I found myself the centre of a dirty procession of all ages and genders, that followed me round and round the block in increasing numbers ; large girls walking backwards in front of me ; women with baskets of clothes on their heads going out of their way to walk by my side and staring with open mouth,—all of them staring. The slightest betrayal of irritation on my part would have served only to increase the crowd, and I tried to look perfectly composed and good-natured. But now and then there was an inward rise of unsaintly feeling that resembled that of the two she-bears of Holy Scripture that rudely scattered a crowd of young Spaniards following hard upon the heels of an ancient prophet.

Ndong was at first exasperated by this unwelcome publicity ; but later his feelings were relieved by an inadvertent remark. Before reaching Teneriffe, two missionary ladies, to whom I am grateful for many kindnesses, had made a little suit for him out of some of their own clothes. This suit was far beyond anything he had ever hoped to possess. And in addition to this I bought him a pair of shoes at Santa Cruz—little canvas shoes with hemp soles, for which I paid a peseta. When he protested against the rude staring of the Spaniards, and was about to cry, I remarked that perhaps these poor Spanish children were only admiring his fine clothes. He took me more literally than I had expected, and from that time made no more complaint.

After four days I left Santa Cruz by a stage-coach, travelling directly across the middle of the island to Orotava, a small port on the other side. Orotava is situated at the base of the great Teneriffe Peak, one of the greatest in the world, which rises to a height of

12,500 feet above the sea and is supposed to be the Mt. Atlas of ancient fable. Above the town the broad landscape, on which the quaint hut of the toiling peasant contrasts with stately English homes, rises at first slowly and then more rapidly, until at last it sweeps upward far above the clouds. On a hill three miles from the town towards the Peak stands the magnificent English hotel, where I stayed, surrounded with many acres of the loveliest flowers in terraced gardens. It is a perfect fairy-land. The hotel is immense in size, and in winter it is filled with English guests; but I was there in summer and I was the only guest.

The hotel commands the finest view of the Peak. It is usually hidden behind the clouds by day, and is visible in the evening. As one sees it first, in the late afternoon, a white cloud is stretched across its middle height, concealing the mountain all but the very summit which appears like a celestial island floating upon radiant clouds in the high heavens. It is fifteen miles to the summit. There is a good road and one can make the ascent on a donkey, all but the last three miles, which most people prefer to walk. Near the summit the ground is but a few inches below the surface, which is usually the only evidence that it is still an active volcano. But two years ago there issued from the crater for several months a volume of smoke which at the distance of the hotel, fifteen miles, appeared as large as the funnel of an ocean steamer.

The distance from Santa Cruz to Orotava is twenty-six miles; and the road of course passes up and down the mountain grades, in some places very steep. We were nine hours on the way. The old coach, a relic of bygone ages, was so "romantic" that I doubted whether it would ever reach its destination. It was drawn by three scraggy horses, a little older than the coach, at whom the driver

never ceased shouting, as he cracked his long-lashed whip about their heads. The harness was of sundry materials, leather straps, ropes and chains, tied and knotted any place and everywhere. And they were continually parting, especially in critical ascents of the road, at which the driver would spring from his seat in a panic, as if such a casualty had never happened before, notwithstanding the evidence of many previous knots. Then seeing the excitement of the passengers, who were trying to scramble out, but in such disorder that they jammed together and each one prevented the others, he would block the coach and proceed to repair the harness, in which art he ought to have been an expert, if practice makes perfect. No sooner did we reach the next ascent, however, than as if by the spell of some malignant sprite all the knots untied at the same moment, and again the passengers were thrown into a state of panic.—But one gets used to being killed. We had two relays of horses on the way.

The coach was apparently intended for four persons, but for a considerable part of the distance was occupied by seven, four of whom smoked cheap cigars, although the windows were closed much of the time. For we ascended the mountain to a great height, and night coming on at the same time, it was very cold, much more so than I had prepared for, and being fresh from the equator, I suffered as if I had been thrust into the Arctic zone. Ndong had a high fever, and I had to wrap my travelling-rug around him. The result was that for the next ten days I had one of the severest colds I have ever had in my life. The coach was so crowded that I could only save Ndong from being crushed or sat upon by holding him on my knee, but he was very much exhausted by the journey.

Before reaching Orotava I left the coach which did not

pass the Grand Hotel, to which I was bound. I took a carriage, which carried some of the mails from that point, and which passed the hotel. The driver was told to leave me at the hotel. But he forgot and took me on down the steep grade, a mile further towards the town. Then, recalling the order he had received he suddenly stopped, and pointing to the lights of the hotel up the steep height behind us invited me to get out. I kept my seat and requested him to drive me back to the hotel. A "palaver" ensued in which neither of us understood in particular what the other was saying. For he spoke only Spanish, of which I did not know a sentence. I had no money accessible before reaching the hotel. I tried to tell him that I would pay him ; but he probably did not understand. Then I thought that the matter might as well be cut short ; so pointing to the hotel I gave him a peremptory order in the English language, but the accent was universal. In reply he whipped his horses and drove straight on to the town. Reaching his destination, on the main street, he jumped down and with violent gesticulation proceeded to throw all my baggage into the street, which was a sufficient inducement for me to follow ; and I found myself, at eleven o'clock at night, miserably cold, with a sick child in my arms, and with all my baggage, in the street of a foreign town where there was no person with whom I could speak a word.

Several loafers who were still abroad gathered around, and recalling by mere chance the name of a Spanish hotel in the town, I directed them to carry my baggage and the child, and show me the way to it. Fortunately it was quite near. I remained there that night, and next day went to the Grand.

In the community there was a physician, whose services I requested, Dr. Ingram, a Scotchman, who was residing there for his health. He found that one of

Ndong's lungs was completely congested, and he advised that I should send him to a hospital three miles further up the mountainside and close to his home. Accordingly I took Ndong to the hospital where he remained for a week.

I went every day to see him, riding the six miles, to the hospital and back, on a donkey, which added another chapter of novel experience. The Canary Island donkey is a very diminutive quadruped, the colour of a mouse and as innocent looking as a lamb. Its ears are about as long as its legs. The price of the donkey's hire includes the owner, who runs behind and shouts, and prods him with a stick. After two days' experience I concluded that shouting and prodding were of no use whatever, and realizing that the moral man in me was rapidly degenerating, I decided on the third day to leave the driver at home and even pay a higher price if necessary for the donkey without a driver, intending myself to assume the management of this soft-eyed creature, who perhaps only needed a little petting, for those eyes bespoke a peaceful temper. The owner readily assented to the proposition and very wisely requested me to pay in advance.

In a few minutes I had experienced to the full the pain of misplaced confidence. My donkey was a facsimile of the immortal *Modestine*. Having patted the donkey kindly and exchanged with her a long look of mutual regard, I mounted. She started off on an easy trot until the owner was out of sight. Then she stopped and stood still and declined to go on in spite of coaxing, kicking and whipping, until I seriously thought of building a fire under her to get her to move. While I was reflecting upon the adaptation of means to ends and for the time had ceased from all measures of coercion, she started as suddenly as she had stopped and with as little reason. She seemed to be clear outside the principle of causality that inheres in the universe. And having started, she

ran anywhere and in every direction, evincing neither purpose nor method in her going except a marked predilection for hedges and brambles.

In less than two minutes, however, she reverted to her natural gait, which, like that of *Modestine*, was something as much slower than a walk as a walk is slower than a run. Under cruel and continuous beating I forced her to maintain a gait that I hoped would carry me to the hospital and back before night, six miles in an entire afternoon. Occasionally my spirit revolted from the ignoble occupation of so maltreating a poor dumb animal. But the moment I relaxed she turned aside from the road and began to browse. Each peasant that passed me threw back his head and laughed. An inward consciousness that I would have laughed myself if I had been in their place only added to my misery. "But O, what a cruel thing is a farce to those engaged in it!" Under the influence of their laughter and the perversity of *Modestine* humanity died in my heart and I belaboured her with all the strength and vivacity that my health would allow, stopping only to get my breath and to mop the perspiration from my superheated brow. Of course, I might better have walked the rocky ascent; but in one thing I was as obstinate as the donkey—I would not give up my undertaking to ride her to the hospital and back. Besides, I kept hoping that, as she could not do worse, she might possibly do better; otherwise my arm should have failed me for despair. And to think that I was paying for all this disservice! By some strange fortuity of circumstances we actually reached the hospital, and afterwards the hotel, where I took final leave of her, a weary but a wiser man. At parting she again turned to me with an affectionate look of lamb-like innocence; but a deep sense of injury together with aching limbs rendered me insensible to her magnanimity.

The people of Tencriffe are so far behind modern times that the barbers are still the surgeons. Dr. Ingram blistered Ndong's congested lung and the barber was afterwards called in daily to dress the wound. After six days I took Ndong back to the hotel. He seemed on the way to recovery, and was much stronger on his feet.

Under Mr. Marling's teaching he had acquired a habit of prayer morning and evening to which he had ever been faithful. Nothing could surpass the pathos of the prayers that he offered thanking God for every kindness that he had received from anybody and pleading for his complete recovery. He knew that he was a great care to me and it troubled him. On one occasion he entreated: "O Father in heaven, please make me well; for I've been sick so long; and I'm so little; and I have no father nor mother."

The day after he returned from the hospital I observed that he was inclined to be impatient; the next day he was more impatient, and was positively disobedient. I was surprised and pained; and I wondered whether it could be possible that my constant care had in any way spoiled a disposition which years of neglect and adversity had only sweetened. But it was soon explained. That evening while he was eating his dinner, in a little room next the dining-room where I was eating mine, I heard him talking excitedly to the waiter. I immediately went to him and carried him to my room. He sat down and covering his face with both his hands held them there without moving. I spoke to him but he did not answer. Then removing his hands from his face, I called him by name. He turned his eyes towards mine in an agony of fear: it was his last sane moment. He uttered a loud shriek, and another, and another. I caught him in my arms as he went into a convulsion and laid him on my bed. But I knew that upon this poor little boy, from his

birth marked out for misfortune, and who had now suffered so long, had at last fallen the most terrible of human calamities—insanity ; and that, too, just when his recovery seemed hopeful.

All night he continued talking wildly, and shrieking at intervals. In the morning he was more quiet, though not more sane. Nor was there any marked change during the ten long weary days that we still remained in the hotel. He gradually became weaker and more insane. I did not let him out of my sight except when I went to my meals, and then I locked him in my room.

Once when I returned from dinner I found him dressed in a suit of white pajamas of mine. He said to me : “ That woman who comes in to attend to the room while you are at dinner is a very foolish person. She came in this evening and looked at me and laughed, and laughed. But all Spaniards seem to be foolish.”

On the 10th of July I returned to Santa Cruz. The next day the *Volta* arrived and I immediately went on board. I looked forward with dread to the long journey on the steamer with an insane child. I engaged a second-class cabin (although I was a first-class passenger) that I might be removed from the white passengers ; for on these steamers there are seldom any white men travelling second-class. Again, by the kindness of the captain, Ndoug occupied the cabin with me. He was determined to go all over the ship, but it was more than ever necessary that I should restrain him. He became impatient of the restraint, and regarded me as his prison-keeper. It made a great difference when this child, who had loved me with the utmost devotion, now turned against me. But his own suffering was increased by this feeling ; nor was there anything I could do to relieve it. I simply waited for the end and prayed to Him who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb.

There were on board sixteen officers of the English army who were expecting to debark at Cape Coast Castle and were bound for the Ashantee territory of the interior, which, as you probably know, has been for several months the scene of another great uprising of the natives almost as formidable as that of thirty years ago. When we reached Sierra Leone, we also took on board more than two hundred native soldiers, as deck-passengers. I am glad to testify that among these sixteen officers there were several real gentlemen, in the American sense; others were tolerable; and there were still others. They were not pleasant fellow passengers. We were looking forward with some dread to their last night on board; and they also were looking forward to it, but with feelings entirely different from ours. We were expecting to reach Cape Coast Castle on Thursday. But for the last sixty hours the captain, without telling anybody, used the reserve power of two knots an hour, increasing our full speed from ten to twelve knots. Accordingly, it was with astonishment and unmixed joy that on Wednesday morning, coming on deck, we read on the bulletin: "Cape Coast Castle this morning at eight o'clock!" They had not time to get drunk.

But, in any case, the heartrending scene which we witnessed soon after we had anchored would probably have sobered them. Five missionaries of the Swiss *Basle Mission* were brought on board in a most pitiful and awful condition. Among them was that great and widely-known veteran, Mr. Ramseyer, whom I had long wished to meet. Mrs. Ramseyer was also in the party, besides two other younger women and another man.

At the outbreak of the war these missionaries had fled to Kummassi, the seat of the English government, and were there when that city was besieged by the natives. The English governor was also in the city. For several

months they had lived on half-rations, until they were so reduced in flesh that their friends would not have recognized them. All this time they were waiting and watching for the arrival of reinforcements from the English army. At last, having waited for the expected relief until their supplies were nearly exhausted, they broke through the lines of the enemy and made a desperate effort to reach the coast. The governor escaped at the same time and with his retinue started for the coast by a different road. Along the main road the enemy was strongest so that it was impassable; therefore the missionary party of six persons, three men and their wives, together with their fifty carriers, took a most circuitous road, and indescribably bad. They all walked but Mrs. Ramseyer who was carried in a hammock. Many of their carriers were shot down by the enemy and others died by the way, being exhausted by famine. I think it was only fifteen carriers that reached the coast. One man of the missionary party died when they had been a week on the way. They walked for twenty-five successive days before they reached the coast. One woman, the wife of the man who died on the way, walked all the last day without shoes.

"That day, as well as others," said Mr. Ramseyer, "we waded in water to our waists, and sometimes almost to the women's shoulders."

The collapse came when they reached the coast; at least for all but Mr. Ramseyer, a man of iron constitution. The next day the *Volta* called and they were brought on board and were laid upon the deck like corpses; all but Mr. Ramseyer.

The captain, whose humour and inexhaustible anecdote were usually an antidote for the tedium and weariness of so long a journey, was overcome by the scene on deck to the extent that I saw him brush a tear away. And

then, finding it absolutely necessary to do something, as a vent to his feeling of sympathy, and supposing that the very best thing for the missionary party all round would be a strong stimulant, he stepped to the skylight and shouted: "Whisky! Whisky!" Then, evidently reflecting that if a little whisky were good, more would be better, he circulated about the deck shouting, "Whisky!" at every steward who put his head out of a port-hole.

It sounded like an invocation to some favourite fetish; and for that matter whisky is the fetish of many white men in West Africa. They invoke its aid in all their troubles. If there had been many more stewards around, I am afraid there would have been a serious shortage of whisky for the rest of the voyage, and such an event would have created greater consternation on the coast than the Ashantee war itself.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed a man in the saloon who had been occupied with writing and did not know what was occurring on deck, "where is all that whisky going at this hour of the morning? What's come on board? the English army?"

"No," replied the steward, "it's a party of missionaries." The man went up the companionway two steps at a time to see the party of missionaries who could drink so much whisky. I do not remember whether the missionaries drank any of the whisky; but it may be taken for granted that it was not wasted.

While they still lay on the deck, Mr. Ramseyer, standing up, told the story of their sufferings to the shocked and eager passengers assembled about him. Until this morning the war had been a kind of a jest to these officers of the army; but now it became a stern reality, and the change in their behaviour was noticeable. One of them, by the way, was shot by a native and instantly killed a few days after landing.

That same evening Mr. Ramseyer told me of the experience of himself and Mrs. Ramseyer in the former Ashantee war, thirty years ago. In that war they were captured by the natives and held for ransom. Five long years, from 1869 to 1874, they were prisoners, carried about from place to place to escape the pursuit of the English. They were told that they would be killed rather than given up. During the first year their feet were put in stocks at night to prevent their escape. But they made friends of their captors, who finally gave them up without ransom. They went to Switzerland for a long rest, and then returned again to their work.

Mr. Ramseyer closed his story of this latest war by declaring triumphantly that the Christian natives had not taken part in the rebellion; though their loyalty had cost many of them their lives.

I have digressed at length from my subject and am several days ahead of my story; but I am glad to have this opportunity of recording the heroism of this grand old man, great alike in counsel and in action; whose advice successive governors of Ashantee for many years have sought; and the equal heroism of his noble wife, and the devotion of the other missionaries of the party, who might have escaped safely at the outbreak of this war, but that they chose rather to suffer with their people.

I said that from the time we came on board at Santa Cruz Ndong was disposed to wander over the ship, and I had to watch him closely. Several times he escaped from me. On one occasion I had been up with him until about three o'clock in the morning. He was then asleep and I also lay down and slept soundly for a little while. But during this time he had wakened and was gone. The door was fastened at the first hook and I did not suppose that he could pass through. He went on a tour of inspection around the ship; but in a few minutes he was tired

and wished to return. He became confused and wandered into the saloon, at the other end of the deck, and from the saloon into the cabin which he had occupied with me when we went north. One of the army officers, a captain, an entire stranger to me at the time, occupied the cabin. Imagine his surprise when he was awakened in the dark by a strange hand upon his face. Supposing it to be the hand of a robber, he seized it; but finding how very, very small it was, he concluded that his life was not in immediate danger. He remembered the little boy whom he had seen with me, and calling a steward he sent him to me. I apologized to the gentleman next morning as best I could. His generosity relieved my humiliation.

All the way to Teneriffe Ndong had been getting weaker each day. One morning I took him on deck as usual, but in a little while he asked to be carried back to bed. All that day and the next he lay quietly repeating stories from the Gospel, one after another. He was again patient and loving as before, and his mind was clearer. On Thursday morning, July 19th, about three o'clock he wakened, and I rose and sat beside him. He was very weak and spoke with effort. But after a while he talked more, and without difficulty. I had partly raised him in the bed and he lay on the pillows with his arm around my neck. At last, with eyes dilated and aglow with the beauty of another world, he said: "I see Mr. Marling; he comes towards the door; and beyond him I see the City of God; and Jesus is there. Do you not see, Mr. Milligan?"

"No, Ndong," I said.

After a while he fell asleep; and some hours later he passed into the deeper sleep in which there is "no more pain"; for he had gone to be with Jesus, "which is far better."

That same day at noon we buried him at sea, two hundred miles west of Sierra Leone. Only those who have witnessed a burial at sea know how it affects the mind with a nameless depression and spreads a gloom over all on board. It is perhaps the awful vastness of the ocean grave that imparts this sense of desolation. The sailors have many superstitions regarding death on shipboard. For instance, they say that sharks invariably follow the ship for twenty-four hours before a death takes place.

I have several times conducted burial services at sea;—once, on a French steamer, the burial of a deputy-governor of Senegal. The body wrapped in canvas, and with heavy weights at the feet, is placed upon a plank at the open gangway, with the feet towards the sea, ropes being attached to the inner end of the gangplank. After the service, at the signal of the captain, the engines are stopped, whose ceaseless beating, night and day, the ear had not seemed to hear until it stopped. The ensuing stillness is like the sudden suspension of nature. At this moment the sailors standing by lift the ropes and draw the gangplank over the ship's side until it tilts and the body slides into the sea. A momentary circling of the water, and nothing more remains to mark the place. Another signal, the engines again commence the ceaseless beating, and the effect is even more depressing; it is like the sudden knocking at the gate after the murder in *Macbeth*. Death is only realized in contrast to the world's activity. On these African steamers which so often have the sick on board, especially on the homeward voyage, deaths are often kept secret and the burials performed at night, for the sake of the passengers; and it is a kindly custom.

The bodies of natives dying on board are often flung overboard without even being wrapped, and there is never any formal service. But the captain of the *Volta*

to all the rest of his kindness added this also, that he gave little Ndong a white man's burial. The boatswain wrapped the body in its canvas shroud and laid it upon the gangplank with the British flag thrown over it. As I took my place at the side, the captain stepped forward and stood beside me. A missionary brother read some verses of Scripture ; another missionary, of Ndong's own colour, offered a prayer. The captain gave the signal and the body, wrapped in its "heavy-slotted hammock-shroud, dropped in its vast and wandering grave."

I have said little of his passionate love for me ; but it will ever be one of the sweetest memories of my life in Africa. And when my own time comes and I shall see with unholden eyes the land that is fairer than day, I am thinking that among those who first shall greet me will be Ndong Mba, the little scholar.

XVI

A CHURCH

“Ethiopia shall haste to stretch out her hands unto God.”

—*Psalm 68: 31.*

THERE are many who seem to think that the heathen, the world over, are reiterating the ancient cry of Macedonia, “Come over and help us,” and that multitudes are converted to Christianity at the first hearing of the Gospel; notwithstanding that in our own land those who know its transcendent import and ample evidence, and those who have even been trained in Christian households, are not so easily won. Degradation and ignorance are a poor preparation for Christian faith.

To the cultured heathen of old the Gospel was foolishness, and it is not less foolish to the uncultured heathen. The inspiring vision of a nation in a day is more poetic than factual. Neither the nation nor the individual is won in a day. Evangelism would be a simple process if it were only to say, as Philip said to Nathanael: “Come and see.” Nathanael, however, was not a bloodthirsty savage, but a pious Jew. It is certain that our duty does not end in merely announcing the Gospel to the heathen, and giving them the opportunity to hear, while we pass the word on to others; for this does not evangelize, nor accomplish anything else worth while. The watchword, lifted with battle-cry fervour, that appeals for the evangelization of the world in this generation,

has inspired the zeal of many and has thereby done good service ; but it is liable to look for geographical rather than moral results, and the policy of missions, if it respond to this exigent desire, becomes spectacular, the aim being to cover the utmost territory. New work is begun before the old is half done, with a consequent waste of the labour already expended. New stations are opened before the old are half manned for thorough work ; and since only a thorough work can ever become self-sustaining and be left to take care of itself, it follows that this principle of forced extension defeats every other principle, and in the end defeats itself.

I know eleven missionary societies working in West Africa, and in most of those societies there is need of a policy based upon reality versus romance. In most of them the missionaries agree that the stations are seriously undermanned. I know one mission station at least which has been opened for more than sixty-five continuous years, and missionaries are still there without the least likelihood of their moving on ; for the simple reason that the station has been so undermanned in all these years that they have not yet trained a native ministry ; whereas, if instead of making haste to open new stations they had concentrated their forces there in sufficient numbers to do a thorough work, they might have left it long ago to the care of the natives themselves, and the missionaries might have opened new fields, with the likelihood that those also would in a reasonable length of time be sufficiently evangelized to be left to themselves.

Nothing retards progress like too much haste. The cause of the undermanned stations and the resultant crippled work is not, as many will say, that there are not enough missionaries, but that there are too many stations. The policy cannot make missionaries, but it does make stations, and a wise policy will adapt the number of sta-

tions to the number of missionaries, instead of so scattering the missionaries that not one of them can do a work that will remain. In the arithmetic of missions two men can do not only twice as much but ten times as much as one. The French Protestant Society, whose work on the Ogowé River in the Congo Français is without doubt the most successful work in all West Africa, have only two stations, but have ten missionaries at each station. Neither can it be said that the crippled force at work in most of the missions is due to the hostile climate, inasmuch as every year, and almost every month, the unexpected happens, and missionaries are obliged to lay down their work suddenly and go home. I reply that *elsewhere* (as I have said before) it is the unexpected that happens, but in Africa it is the unexpected that we *expect*. We know the climate. It is one of the exigencies of the situation, and since the policy cannot change the climate, the climate ought to change the policy.

A policy of true evangelism must aim to establish a self-sustaining church, that is, a church which is independent of foreign money, and which is manned with its own ministry; and this is a slow process. It involves a threefold work, that of preaching (not on Sunday only, but daily, probably itinerating) that of teaching (at least in Africa, where there are no native schools) and the higher training for the ministry. If any one of these departments is wanting, the work is not progressing towards a self-sustaining church, and the policy is so far defective. But here is work for several men, at least, at one mission station. To place them at several stations means that no thorough or progressive work can be done at any station. And as such scattering of forces is poor policy it is also poor economy. For a station is usually an extensive property, expensive to build and expensive to maintain. The unnecessary multiplying of stations is extravagance.

In our Presbyterian mission these considerations are being fully realized, and the present policy evinces a determination to do thorough work in the field already occupied rather than to enlarge our territory at the expense of crippling the established work. We have learned by our failures as well as by our successes.

The result of an inadequate force of missionaries at a station is not so much that the missionary is overworked—most missionaries are not making any such complaint—but that the work is not adequately done. And this wears on mind and heart; for the work is one, and if a part of it be neglected the whole must suffer. It is not the work that the missionary actually does that wears him out, but that which he does not do and cannot do, although perhaps his success depends upon it.

The Fang work included itinerating over a field more than a hundred miles by fifty miles, and the charge of a school in which I had no adequate assistant for two years. To this was added the Mpongwe work when Mr. Boppell's health compelled him to leave the field. The Mpongwe work included the charge of the church at Baraka with its regular Sunday and mid-week services, and the pastoral work, a class in the Sunday-school, a teachers' meeting, and the instruction of a candidate for the ministry. At such a station there is also a great deal of secular work; the care of the premises and the buildings, which are in constant need of repair, the care of several boats, the buying of building material, the charge of a store, ordering and receiving our own supplies, the treasurership—the latter a large work, because all purchases of goods and food were made in Europe and America. I suffered some under the strain, and the work, of course, suffered more than I did. My day and evening were laid out by the hour in a routine that was fixed as far as circumstances would allow.

The arrival of an English steamer, once a month, deranged all plans; but it was a welcome interruption, chiefly because it brought the mail. It is a pathetic instance of the white man's interest that the natives everywhere, even if they know no other word of English, have learned to call the steamer, "the mail," because this is what they hear the white man say when he sees it. The steamer nearly always came in the morning. While it was still fifteen miles away we could see the smoke on the horizon. There was always a strife among the boys and the men for which of them would be the first to announce it. At the sight of it they all came running and shouting, "Mail! Mail!" If Toko made the announcement he would say: "Mr. Milligan, mail live for come; I look him."

Immediately I call Ndong Koni and tell him to call the crew, get out the *Evangeline*, and see that they all have their uniforms.

Meanwhile I put on a suit of white drill, such as I have described, a white helmet, and white shoes. Thus attired in the regulation best I go aboard and take breakfast with the captain, who gives me all the news of the coast. If he has cargo for the mission I wait until it is discharged on the beach, and then go ashore and have it carried up to the mission storeroom. When this is done I read my letters. But I sometimes carried the bundle of them around with me full half a day before reading them; and I always waited until I could close the door of my study and give the order that I was not to be disturbed. ~ But an urgent duty awaits me. A technical and minute declaration in French must be made of any and all the goods that have arrived. In declaring provisions, for instance, the different provisions in a given box must be declared separately, with the weight of each. The boxes, of course, could not be opened under any circum-

stances until everything was declared and a permit received. But if the bills of lading should be delayed, or if they were not made out with all the particular weights, there was endless trouble. I could not open the boxes until I made the declaration, and I could not make the declaration until I opened the boxes. In such a case, after much waiting and annoyance, an officer would come and I would open the boxes in his presence. Sometimes these declarations were very troublesome. In one instance there was malted milk in one of the boxes. I did not know how to declare it; for I could not imagine under what class it would come. That I might make no mistake, and run the risk of a fine, I sent some malted milk that I had already on hand to the *chef* of the *douanes* telling him what it was and how it was made, and asking him how I should declare it. After a day's consideration he wrote advising me that malted milk should be declared as *pain d' épice*—*spiced bread*. But if the rules and regulations bothered me, I must say that the French custom-officers are, I believe, the most courteous and obliging in the world, and a striking contrast to American custom-officers.

But besides the arrival of the steamer there are other interruptions less welcome. While I am busy preparing my sermon for Sunday, in time stolen from other duties, a man appears at the door, and without waiting for recognition asks me to go with him to the mission store and get him a package of rat-poison—price about five cents. Shall I, or shall I not, go to the store? We are owing him this amount for produce he has sold us, and he holds a “bon” for it, which he can negotiate only at our store. He lives far away, and his friends are waiting for him. Besides, rat-poison itself is a kind of Gospel in this rat-ridden land. It ranks about next to soap. I get him his rat-poison. But I do not believe in mission

stores. At some stations, of course, they are a necessity : at some, I know they are a serious hindrance to the real work of the missionary. It is vain to answer that some money (a small amount at the most) is thus turned into the mission treasury. I reply that missionaries are not sent out to make money ; let those who stay at home do that : they are sent to spend it. I am glad to say that if I accomplished nothing else in Africa I finally sold out that mission store, and gave our trade to one of the trading-houses. And I am glad also to add that instead of a financial loss, we actually gained by dealing with the traders, not to speak of the great saving of time for the serious work of the missionary.

The work of itinerating I regarded as my chief work, however much detained from it. For most men it is also the most interesting work, inasmuch as it brings one into contact with the people in their native condition. With all their savagery there is really very little danger of violence at their hands. But a drunken savage is to be feared. Not that he is much more bloodthirsty ; but his greed overmasters him, and he might easily be tempted to kill for plunder. For if the white man had nothing but the suit of clothes which he had on him he would still be rich enough to inspire native cupidity.

One Sunday at Nenge Nenge, a town sixty miles up the river, I left the launch at anchor and went on up the river several miles in a canoe borrowed from a trading-house located at Nenge Nenge. It was a very large canoe ; and since the workmen were all idle, the trader gave me a crew of fifteen men. The West African trader is supremely generous in granting all such favours. It happened that a short time before this a white trader of Gaboon, a young man whom I knew very well, who had been in Africa less than a year, returning one night by boat from Elobey Island to the mainland, was drowned.

The body was never recovered, and indeed, it is not unlikely that he was immediately seized and devoured by the sharks. Not one of the crew was lost, and although we could not formulate a charge against them, we more than suspected foul play on their part. No one will ever know the tragedy of that young man's last hour.

The reeency of this occurrence made me, perhaps, more suspicious than usual, or qualified my courage, on the occasion of the canoe ride at Nenge Nenge. The men had all been drinking, which I did not observe until we had started, and they were all of one tribe, a distinct disadvantage to me if they should mean mischief. And what was worse, they were just fresh from a distant bush town, and never had been in contact with white men. The river is broad at this place, and the current is very swift. They first started to sing one of their wild and fascinating boat-songs, keeping time with the paddles. Then the leader began improvising, according to their custom, on the theme of the white man and the white man's riches, the others responding with a refrain. They were gradually getting excited, and were swaying their bodies from side to side, so that I feared continually that the canoe would be capsized. Then the song became a yelling-match, and they were getting still more excited. I had never at any time had a more distinct feeling that I was in a dangerous company of real savages, fifteen to one, and if I had been in their musical mood I should have been singing Robert Louis Stevenson's immortal buccancer song :

" Fifteen men on the dead man's chest —
Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum ! "

Before we reached the most secluded part of the river, and while there was still a small town to be passed, I ordered the headman to go close into the bank away from

the current until we should pass a turn in the river. When I came close to the bank I said I would land here. They knew, of course, that this was not my destination, and they supposed that I would continue the journey in a few minutes. But as soon as I had landed I ordered them back to Nenge Nenge, and I proceeded in a small canoe which I hired at the town near by. Thus I avoided the possibility of being cut off in the flower of my youth. Or, it may be that I missed an adventure that I should have been proud to tell afterwards.

I often found the whole town engaged in dancing, of which they are passionately fond. It is not only their chief amusement, but also serves for physical culture, and accounts for their well-developed forms and graceful carriage. A great dancer among them becomes widely known, and is as highly esteemed as a virtuoso among us. I was one day teaching the people in a town where there were four Christians, when my attention was arrested by a good-looking and singularly well-developed man coming towards us down the street. I had not seen in Africa nearly so fine a form. He was graceful as he walked, and much more so when he threw himself down on the ground. He seemed to me a very Apollos Belvidere in ebony. They told me that he was a famous dancer. He had applied himself with diligence and extraordinary perseverance to the practice of all the difficult movements of the native dance until he was the envy of the men of his tribe. It was probably his persistent application to this practice, and his constancy of purpose, that gave to his face an unusual expression of gravity and strength.

I was reminded of the story told by Addison of a shepherd who used to divert himself by tossing up eggs and catching them again without breaking them ; in which he became so skillful that he could keep up four at a time

for several minutes together ; and who, by his perseverance and application had contracted the utmost severity and gravity of countenance. "That same attention and perseverance," says Addison, "had they been rightly applied, might have made him a greater mathematician than Archimedes."

My native friend, for such he became, remained after the service to talk with me. He had come from his town five miles through the bush on purpose to meet me. He said he had been in this town frequently, and had heard those four Christians telling the people about God and the salvation of Christ, and he desired to be a Christian. He afterwards put away an extra wife, and he also renounced his dancing, for their dances are associated with certain immoralities. We never know in what unlikely place the Shepherd will find His sheep. Our duty is to declare His Word in every place, and His sheep will hear His voice and follow Him.

But if I frequently found the people engaged in the noisy dance, I sometimes found the whole town steeped in sleep. One day I entered a town that was like a city of the dead ; absolutely quiet, and no one to be seen. I walked the length of the town, thrusting my head in at every door, and asking the people to come out and hear God's message ; but only one man came. At last I asked this man if he would go and call the people. He started down the street, calling men and women by name as he passed, telling individuals in a loud voice their particular need of this preaching service, because of their personal sins, which he forthwith enumerated and charged upon them, exposing the private wickedness of men and women in brief biographical sketches, which it might be interesting but not edifying to repeat. I need not say that they responded to this urgent invitation. In a few minutes the whole population was in the street, eloquent

with resentment. One might think that they had the tenderest reputations to sustain. I would not commend to my fellow ministers in America this novel method of securing a congregation.

But how would one preach to such an audience? or what would one say? I am often asked. Well, that day I asked the people what kind of a king they would choose, if God should give them their choice. After some discussion they settled upon the idea of power. They would like a king who would be stronger than all their enemies, and especially stronger than the Mpongwe people. Then I taught them that Jesus whom God had sent is such a one; and I told them how He stilled the storm. Next, I asked them whether power alone would be sufficient. They first thought it would. "But," I said, "suppose your king had no sense. Do you put a gun into the hands of a child? And would you like to see a foolish person armed with power that none of you could resist?"

"Oh," they said, looking at one another, "we never thought of that," and it was soon agreed that the king of their choice must be wise as well as powerful. Then I said that Jesus was wise with the wisdom of God, knowing all our needs and how to supply them. Again I asked if this was all they would desire in their king, that he be powerful and wise. They were quite sure.

"But," I said, "suppose he were bad? that he loved only himself and robbed and killed you?"

Just at this moment a little child began to cry, and all the child's numerous parents, a considerable part of the audience, turned upon it with such a howl of remonstrance that the frightened child ran for the bush.

"Suppose," I continued, when they were again quiet, and looking as if they had done a good work,— "suppose your king were like yourselves (for you are cruel as

beasts) and that he should howl at you and frighten you just as you did that child?"

That would be a calamity indeed. They soon agreed that their king ought also to be good; and that this was the principal thing, although they had not thought of it before. And again, I told them of the love and sacrifice of Christ.

But do I really think that they heeded this Gospel? I think that as I left them talking together some probably laughed at the message,—in fact I heard them,—some doubted, and some perhaps pondered these things in their hearts, to whom they may afterwards have become the words of eternal life.

One often must turn aside during the service to answer irrelevant remarks. I was once preaching in a town where the white man had only been seen a few times, and was still an object of as much curiosity as would be an inhabitant of Mars, if he should make his advent among us, when a woman in the audience tried to attract my attention by repeating, "I say, white man! I say! I say!"

At last I asked her what she wanted. She said: "I want to ask you a question." I told her to wait until I had finished talking. But she could not wait, and she kept on interrupting me, until at length I said: "What is your question?" She said: "I want to know if your feet are as white as your hands and face?"

O shade of Saint Paul, who commanded that women keep silence in the churches, and if they wanted to know anything to ask their husbands at home, how well I now understand that injunction!

I answered: "Yes, my feet are as white as my hands and face," and I tried to proceed with the sermon. I had on black socks, and it seems that some of the women, observing them, declared that the white man was not all white; that only his hands and face were white, and that

the rest of him was as black as themselves. My answer, therefore, did not satisfy them all. Some said, "You lie, white man. We have eyes; you lie." I was well used to this inartistic form of contradiction, and I did not object.

They kept on disputing about the socks. But again the same woman said: "Well, white man, we want to see for ourselves."

I could not lose the opportunity of a service merely for the sake of my dignity; so I slipped off a shoe and a sock and showed the audience a white man's foot, and they all agreed that it was beautiful.

Was I speaking of dignity? Ah me! Dignity fades away to a vague impalpability, and finally becomes a cherished memory.

I have already said that the Gospel at first hearing is scarcely intelligible, and time alone brings moral results. I distinctly recall the first religious service that I attended among the Bulu. To them also it was the first service. It was conducted by Dr. Good. Before he got to the sermon he asked me to offer a prayer. After a word of explanation, through an interpreter, about the nature of prayer, I requested the people to close their eyes, and I proceeded to pray in English. Now, this closing of the eyes had very uncanny associations in their minds. I have already told of the Ngi (gorilla) Society, the head of which assumes the form and disposition of a gorilla. He approaches the town roaring like a gorilla, and women and children shut their eyes until he passes; for if they see him they will die. When I asked the people to close their eyes it at once suggested to them some demon spell like that of Ngi, but probably more terrible. All of them, men and women, snapped their eyes shut, and kept them closed tight. And the terrified women, grabbing the babies from their backs (every Bulu woman

has a baby on her back), held their hands over the babies' eyes, and with such pressure that the poor babies simultaneously raised a howl of remonstrance, which in turn frightened the dogs (who made a considerable part of the audience) and they began to bark. A panic ensued, in which the people, keeping their eyes tight closed, tumbled pell-mell out of all sides of the house. I was struggling with a horrid and profane impulse to laugh; but I was a little afraid of Dr. Good; for I had not known him long, and he was my senior. When I turned, however, I saw him fairly doubled with laughter, and I experienced a delightful sense of freedom, and let nature take its course.

On one occasion I preached to a large audience a sermon that seemed to me quite practical, telling them that their chief troubles were within, or "inside," as I said it in Fang. "Your chief trouble," I said, "is not the French government, against which you are always complaining; nor is it these other tribes with whom you are always at war; but your chief trouble is inside of you, in your own hearts."

When I had finished, a leading man arose, and with a grand air took up the theme. "The white man is right," he said; "our worst suffering is inside of us. It is not war—nor witchcraft—nor itch—nor flies—but worms inside." He thought I had preached a very helpful sermon, and invited me to come back again.

At this distance of time I can smile; but such a response is a great trial of faith to a new missionary, especially if he has been led to expect startling results and many conversions attending the very first preaching of the Gospel. At first I was disheartened at the carnality and ignorance depicted in the faces of such audiences. Yet, after a few years of persistent work and patient waiting, I saw scores and scores of just such people spirit-

ually and morally transformed ; and more marvellous was the result from such a beginning.

A certain old chief responded to a sermon on future punishment by saying that he would send one of his wives to hell in his place, and when I suggested that such an arrangement might be attended with serious difficulties he said he would send two of them. Then, when I told him that judging by the history he gave of his wives they would probably be going there on their own account, he said he supposed he would have to give God a couple of ivories for his ransom.

One day I went to a new Fang town, Yengal, about two miles along the beach from Baraka. The tide was rising, and I had to wade through water for some distance ; at one place it was to my waist. I preached in those dripping clothes. On the way to the town I overtook the chief and his head wife. He was very much pleased when he found I was going to his town, and he walked ahead of me, wading into the deeper streams to see whether or not they were too deep for me to wade ; for they were rising fast with the tide. If I had not been already wet, he would have carried me over the streams, and all the deeper places. By the time we reached the town we were good friends. He called the people together, and they all came and gave me their attention during the service. I told them of a way that leads to eternal life, and a way that leads to destruction.

When I had finished speaking, this chief said to me in a most earnest manner : " Now tell me plainly, white man, which road to take when I die ? If you will tell me whether to take the road on the right, or the one on the left, I shall remember."

That he had been kind and courteous to me on the way, made me feel but the greater compassion that his mind was an abyss of darkness.

I have sometimes found a town in a state of preparation and eager inquiry through their casual meeting with native Christians. One day I sailed with the *Evangeline* to a town fifteen miles away, called *Elen Akidia—Dawn of the Morning*; for it is built upon a hill that rises above the surrounding bush so that they can see the first light of day. I stayed in the town over night. In the evening a large audience gathered in the palaver-house, which was lighted by a tiny lamp. It had no chimney, to be sure, but still it was the boast of the town. They had been learning for several years of the Christian religion from ill-instructed natives, but I do not know that any Protestant missionary had ever preached there. They listened so attentively and earnestly that I talked to them for more than an hour. Then, being tired, I went out and sat near by in the dark, but they remained, gravely discussing what they had heard. The chief in closing said: "We have done all these things that God hates. We have beaten our wives and made them work like slaves. We have been cruel to children, and we have neglected the sick. But I think God will forgive us when we tell Him we did not know. We have lived in great darkness; but now the light has come; we must change our ways. And you women, you need not be puffed up because the white man took your part; for you are the cause of most of our troubles. We must all change our ways. I hope the white man will come back soon and help us; for we need help."

The grave tone and serious manner of the speaker, with the dark and silent night surrounding, all deepened the impression of his words, which seemed the most pathetic I had heard from heathen lips; and often again I went to *Elen Akidia—Dawn of the Morning*.

I once visited a town where there was a sick woman, close to death and in great agony. She had become ill

suddenly, and the people, not knowing the cause, concluded she was a witch, or rather that she *had* a witch. The witch in her had turned on her, and was eating her. For the woman had convulsions, and that was a sign that the witch was eating her. They were now able to account for the death of several children in the town; this woman had, without doubt, bewitched them. Her spirit, being "loose from her body," had gone out in the night, and while the children were sleeping, had eaten them. Next morning the children appeared to be well, but they immediately began to fail, and after a while they sickened and died.

I found the woman lying on a bed, consisting of nothing but poles laid upon the ground, although the town was near the coast, and they were long accustomed to better beds. The town was built in a mangrove swamp, and the mosquitoes were so thick that to be exposed to them was torture that one could not long endure. But this woman's bed had no mosquito net, although all the other beds in town were thus furnished. Every little while her body was convulsed, and her features distorted with pain. I gave her some medicine, although I had no idea what was the matter with her; for I had only been in Africa a short time. I was sure that the medicine did her no harm, however, and that is the principal consideration. But it served to teach a moral lesson. I told my boys to make a fire in her house, and I tried to make her comfortable. Her friends refused to help me.

"The woman is a witch," they said, "and the sooner she dies, the better."

When I had made her more comfortable I began to talk to her about God and her need of pardon. At first she seemed destitute of any spiritual instinct. The chief regret that she had about dying was that she did not want to leave her goods. Her goods! a brass bracelet

and leg ring ; a few yards of ealieo, perhaps ; a little oil for the body, and what else but mosquitoes? But there are crises in which the mind is not subject to the ordinary limitations of time, but in a few hours lives through the experience of years. The woman gradually grasped the idea of God's love and the possibilities of the future. A great and mysterious change came over her, and she said : "I have been a wicked woman. What shall I do?" I told her of the cross of Christ. And, like the penitent thief, in agony and pain, she too ceased cursing and began to pray. That night, as I lay in a house near by, I heard her repeating in broken sentences : "Me ne ye mam abé. Me ne ye mam abé. Atat, kwege me ngongol, Atat. M'abune Jésus. M'abune Jésus."—I am sinful. I am sinful. Father, have mercy on me. I believe in Jesus. I believe in Jesus.

I left the town before morning, and two days later she died, still saying : "Atat, kwege me ngongol. M'abune Jésus."

Even the sincerest converts have need of the most patient instruction in the morals of Christianity. Many white men seem to make a business of scoffing at the moral attempts of the native, when God, who looks upon the heart, probably approves. The first earnest inquirer among the Bulu at Efulen was a man named Zanga, whom Dr. Good was daily instructing. One Sunday, when Dr. Good was in Zanga's town, he found him working, and he told him the law of the Sabbath day. Zanga had already learned of it, but he did not think that the work he was doing was forbidden, because Dr. Good had not mentioned that particular work. He at once stopped, and promised that henceforth he would keep the Sabbath in all reverence. The next Sunday Dr. Good found him again at work, putting a thatch roof on a house, and he again corrected him.

Zanga replied: "Why, you don't call this work, do you?" But he stopped it, as before.

The next Sunday Dr. Good again entered Zanga's town. Zanga saluted him, exclaiming enthusiastically: "Ah, Ngoot, I am keeping the Sabbath fine to-day. I have hired two men to make the roof, and I am just sitting here giving them orders." He was doing as well as he knew; and most of us know far more than we do. God knows our thoughts and intentions.

At the beginning of my third year among the Fang, I began to feel that the time of harvest was drawing near. People from towns far and near began to bring their fetishes to me, laying them at my feet, and renouncing them; and the surrender of their fetishes was a better confession than could have been made in words. I especially required the surrender of the father's skull, the most sacred fetish of the men. I soon had so many of these uncanny things that the question what I should do with them became urgent. When I was leaving Africa, a Christian native, who had heard that I was taking some of these skulls with me, came to me in great anxiety and asked me whether I had considered the confusion that might take place at the resurrection if those skulls were on the other side of the sea. Sure enough, I had never thought of that. I scarcely realized the degradation of their beliefs until men and women brought their fetishes to me, and explained them fully as they renounced them.

One day I visited a town in which twenty-two persons, five men and seventeen women, stood up in a line in the street, and delivering up all their fetishes, renounced them, and said that they would follow Christ and worship only the true God. This was the first large group of Christians in one town, and when a church was afterwards organized I gave it the name of that town, *Ayol*, which is still the name of the Fang church. The *Ayol*

Church belongs to Corisco Presbytery, and to the Synod of New Jersey. In a few months there were a hundred Christians, and at the end of a year, two hundred, scattered over the large Fang field in groups of six, eight, or ten persons in a town. They had all discarded their fetishes, and they were meeting together every evening to sing and pray in the hearing of all the people.

The fact that those Christians were not in a single community, but scattered over extensive territory and in widely separated towns, greatly enlarged the outlook for the future. In a single community, it sometimes happens that when a few persons of influence and decision become Christians they make Christianity popular, and the thoughtless crowd follow their lead, but never exhibit a strong type of Christian character. And this suggests another objection to the small, undermanned station. Its work is usually restricted to the vicinity of its location, where the tremendous prestige of the white man makes Christianity dangerously popular, and where the Christians are near enough to the missionary to lean upon him for spiritual support, and perhaps for worldly support also if they are very poor. But these small groups of Fang Christians, scattered in towns far apart, were leaders, not followers, of others. They became Christians when Christianity was not popular, and had no artificial prestige. They were far enough away from the mission for wholesome independence, and near enough for the help which they really needed. They also had a field of opportunity immediately around them, and the whole number brought into contact with the Gospel was very great.

These Christians in saluting each other invariably use the term, "Brother," though they may belong to hostile and warring clans, and before they became Christians might not have been able to pass each other without fight-

ing. And, strange enough, I did not teach them this salutation ; for I never used it myself until they established it. Flesh and blood did not reveal it to them, but the Spirit of God ; for where Christ is, there is the instinct of brotherhood.

The number of Christians gives no idea whatever of the whole effect of Christian influence. Between African heathenism and Christian faith there is an immense interval ; and multitudes, while not professing to be Christians, were yet far removed from their former heathenism. Old beliefs were all unfixed, with a corresponding change in morals. Cannibalism almost ceases at the first sound of the Gospel, and wars become less frequent.

One day two men called upon me, who were not to be suspected of any inclination to Christianity. They told me that the sea had been dreadfully rough during the whole night in which they were on their way to Gaboon. They thought they would all be lost. One of these two men said to the others : “ We have been sinning against God, for we have been travelling to the market all this Sabbath day, and we know that it is wrong.” Then they all prayed to God, as the Christians pray, asking that He would forgive them and save them. I asked him why he did not trust his fetishes in the hour of need ; for he had enough of them on him.

“ Fetishes are nothing,” he replied ; “ it was only an angry God that we feared.” There was a great deal of ignorance in all this ; but it showed that they were far removed from their former faith in fetishes ; for in the crisis they forsook the fetishes, and turned to God.

The care of all these new converts, or catechumens, added an entirely new department to my work, and already the departments were numerous. A convert is baptized and received into the church only after he has been two years on probation ; and during those two years

he is supposed to receive a regular course of instruction. These Christians were now asking for such instruction that they might be received into the church. My purpose had been to form a class in each of the towns where Christians resided, and to place a catechist in charge of several adjacent towns, who would live among the people, and teach them daily. But my catechists were not yet ready, though for some time I had been preparing for the emergency. In connection with the school I had a class of young men, to whom I had been giving special attention, in the hope that they might be fitted for the work of catechists. Yielding to the exigency of circumstances, I placed three of these, Amvama, Obiang, and Eyena, in three principal towns to teach the people. It was a mistake, however, and I soon recalled them.

During the next year I concentrated my efforts upon this class of catechists, and meanwhile, I visited these groups of Christians as often as possible, just to keep up their courage. My catechists accompanied me in my itinerating, and much of their training was in the actual work of preaching and teaching, and in discussions and criticisms as we travelled between the towns. But occasional and desultory teaching did not answer the needs of these new converts. It was hard to keep them waiting; for they had delivered up their fetishes, and were helplessly asking, "What shall we do next?" I kept them waiting a whole year before I sent out the catechists. Those were strainful as well as joyful times, and it was then that I received the name by which all the Fang came to know me, "*Mote Ke Ye*,"—*Man who doesn't sleep*.

In one of my towns six persons who had professed their faith in Christ became weary of waiting, and went over to the Roman Catholics. For a Jesuit priest of the French mission had visited them, and offered to teach them at once. I need not say that it hurt to have the

Jesuits gather the harvest for which I had waited so long. I should have welcomed their help if I believed that they had a real Gospel for the people. There were so many towns in which no missionary work whatever had been done that I had always been sufficiently courteous to pass by those towns where they were working, and go on to those which were utterly heathen. But the Jesuits did not reciprocate this courtesy. Usually, as soon as they heard that I had placed a catechist in a certain town, they immediately sent one of their catechists to that same town. A priest visited Ayol, where, as I have said, there were twenty-two Christians. He knew that they had been waiting long for instruction. He first tried to impress upon them that baptism was necessary to salvation; and he told them that the reason "Mr. Milligan" did not baptize them was that he was their enemy, and was trying to keep them out of heaven. Then he said that he himself was willing to baptize them then and there, and receive them into the church. There were several shrewd men among the Christians who kept them all loyal. They said: "We are not ready to be baptized. We have not been taught." Then the priest offered to stay there a week and teach them every day. But they refused outright, and said they would not be baptized by anybody but myself.

There were many strings to this man's fiddle. When he went into a town where he perceived that there was a strong tie between the people and me, he would assume a most friendly and even affectionate attitude towards me. In one such town he found one of my catechists, Eyena, who had a large class of thirty-one persons, some of whom were only inquirers and not converts. The priest told the people that he and I were the best of friends, and that they ought to treat us both alike; that this large class ought to divide into two parts, and he would place a

catechist there who would teach half of them. They did not waver. But finding that there were several men in the class who were not yet converts, but inquirers, and who were living in polygamy, he at last told those men that if they would enter his class they could be Christians without putting away their wives. This inducement enticed four men out of the class. He could the better take advantage of me because I made it a point never to refer to him among the people. .

When I was once away for a health-change, he visited one of my towns where there were sixteen newly converted Christians. With great enthusiasm he made the bold announcement that Mr. Milligan had been converted to the Roman Catholic faith and that he had come to baptize them and receive them into the only true Church. They were staggered. I do not know what might have happened had it not been for a certain man, Angona. Angona stepping forward, said: "If Mr. Milligan is a Catholic we will all become Catholics. But we will only be baptized by him. So we will wait until he comes." Despite this opposition this Jesuit and myself always seemed to be good friends when we met.

One day I walked to an island town six miles away. It was a new town; the people had recently come from the bush. The road, being also new, was very bad: we sometimes waded in mud to our knees. Ndong Koni called it *ebol nzen*—a rotten road. While I was speaking to the people of the town, on the subject of a future life, endeavouring to awaken their interest by asking questions as to what they knew and believed regarding it, I observed in the audience two persons, a man and a woman, wearing a Roman crucifix, and I addressed my question to them. I found them quite as ignorant as any of the others. "Most of us," they said, "have some belief in a future life; but we really do not know." "For my

part," said the man, "I believe that death finishes everything."

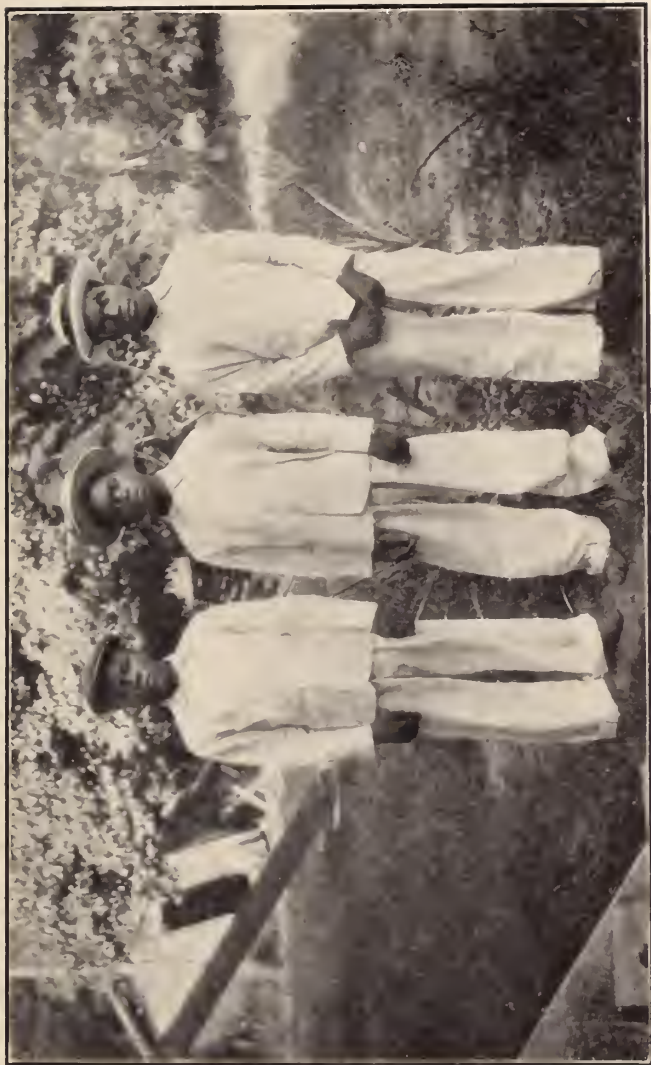
Pointing to the crucifix which he wore, I asked him what it meant. He replied: "This is a Catholic fetish. A priest came into this town when I was very sick and put this thing on me. I suppose it is a health-fetish, for I soon got well and I have not been sick since."

The woman was as ignorant as the man, and they represent a large class who have been baptized and are wearing the crucifix without any idea of its meaning. Thus is the cross of Christ degraded to the level of an African fetish. I would not say, however, that this is the rule. I am sure it is not.

The Jesuits instil a certain idea of morality; but it leaves much to be desired. One day a girl who had just come from confession was quarrelling with a male cousin, or more likely he was quarrelling with her, when in reply to some scurrilous observation, she said to him: "I would half kill you if I were not in a state of grace. But you just wait!"

Time passed, and I had five catechists in the field. At last some of the catechumens were ready to be baptized. Then the church was organized at Ayol, with fourteen members. They were not likely to confound the church of Christ with any mere building made with hands; for as yet there was no building. We organized the church and held the first communion service in the street. The second communion service was held in another town called Makwena, Ndong Koni's town, where his uncle was chief. The Christians of Makwena had built a beautiful chapel of bamboo, with doors and windows on hinges. Ndong Koni had worked in the yard at Baraka in order to buy those doors and windows for the church.

On the occasion of this second communion service I spent the preceding Saturday in going to Ayol and sev-



THREE FANG BOYS.

After several years in the school; also among the first Christians.

eral other widely separated towns with the *Dorothy*, gathering the people for the service. Early Sunday morning I pulled into Makwena with sixty people in the launch, on top of it, and in a big canoe behind. They were singing hymns, and singing them beautifully, for there were enough of my schoolboys there to take the parts. Between the hymns they occupied the time with the praises of *Dorothy*, the like of which, for comfort and for speed, they had never dreamed of. Upon our arrival a large number of people came down to welcome their fellow Christians. They wore more clothing than the whole towu had formerly possessed. These Christians were of various tribes who in former times had been continually at war with each other. And I could imagine such a company coming together and making the little river run red like crimson with each other's blood. But now they were all saluting each other as, "Brother" and "Sister"; and there was such hand-shaking and social palaver that it scarcely seemed possible there could be so much happiness in that land of cruelty and tears. And as I reflected that these were but the first-fruits of a great harvest, all the labour, the trials, the perils, the sickness of the years that had passed seemed as nothing.

Among those who were baptized that day I distinctly recall a certain old woman who had probably lived long enough to have experienced all the evils and the suffering of heathenism. Her face was almost beautiful with the light of joy that shone in her eyes. Her paltry garment was so scrappy and so scanty that I wondered whether there was enough of it to meet the requirements of propriety. But when she came into the service she was dressed in a pure white robe that came up to her shoulders and reached to her feet, and was held with a black sash.

I baptized thirty-seven persons and received several

whom I had already baptized at Baraka, making in all fifty-five members in the Ayol church at the end of that year; and besides there were nearly two hundred catechumens. All those whom I baptized had been on probation and under instruction for two years or more. It was a long service, but the time passed quickly for us all, and more so because we sang many hymns. At length we closed the service by repeating all together the Lord's Prayer :

"Tate wa a n' eyô, e jui die e boñ éki. Ayôñ die nzak. Mam w' a nyege, be boñe mo e si ene, ane b' a bo eyô. Vage bie biji bi a kôge bie emu. Zamege bie mam abé bi a bo, ane bi a zam abé bôt b' a bo bie. Ke lête bie nzèn mekoñ. Kamege ne bie mô't a n' a bé. Togo na, ô ne y' ayôñ, ye ki, y' éwôge, mbè mbè, Amen."

A few months later I held a communion service in one of the up-river towns, in which were gathered all the Christians from the upper towns. There I baptized sixty-five persons, making in all one hundred and twenty members in the Ayol Church. And, besides, there were nearly three hundred catechumens.

When I reflect on the kind of men and women that these Christians are, and consider the savages they might have been; when I realize the surroundings of darkest ignorance, revolting degradation and horrible cruelty in the midst of which they walk in ways of righteousness and truth; when I think how rough that way is and how very dark the night of Africa, my heart goes out to them all in eager sympathy and solicitude.

May the "kindly light" of God's love, seen in the face of His Son, shine more and more upon their path, and lead them on "o'er crag and torrent till the night be gone."

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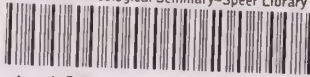
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